The Author's Copy — with some notes or corrections in his handwriting —

It is signed by himself at the end p. 62 —

AN

INQUIRY

INTO

NAVAL TACTICS.

BY

JOHN CLERK of Eldin, Esq;

Edinburgh, January 1. 1782.

AN

INQUIRY, &c.

UPON inquiring into the tranſactions of the Britiſh Navy, during the two laſt, as well as the preſent war, it is remarkable, That, where ſingle ſhips have encountered with ſingle ſhips, or where two, or even three, have been engaged of a ſide, Britiſh ſeamen have, invariably, exhibited inſtances of a ſuperior perſevering courage, intrepidity, and ſkillful ſeamanſhip; yet, when ten, twenty, or thirty great ſhips have been aſſembled, and formed in regular line of battle, it is equally remarkable, that, as invariably, no proper exertion has ever been made, nothing atchieved, not even a ſhip loſt or won on either ſide.

But, in oppoſition to this aſſertion, it has been ſaid, even ſeamen have ſaid, That our men not being more intrepid than thoſe of our neighbours, it is ridiculous to expect a greater exertion from them. It has likewiſe been ſaid, That the ſhips of our enemies, being of a better conſtruction for ſailing, have had it always in their power to avoid an engagement, by outſailing us: And as theſe opinions, unhappily, have already had too much influence, it will be the ſubject of the following Inquiry to ſhow that they have been wrong founded; and that it is neither to the abatement of the innate intrepidity of our ſeamen, nor even to any fault in our ſhipping, that the want of ſucceſs, in the late great ſea-battles, can be imputed.

From our inſular ſituation, the paſſion or deſire of availing ourſelves of a naval force is, by inſtinct, as prevalent with us as that by which all animals are governed, and led to make uſe of the weapons, or talents, with which Nature has furniſhed them, whether for ſupport or defence.

The reaſons why this prevalence of affection did not take place ſooner, might ariſe from our inſular ſituation alſo; for while, at the ſame time that we were ſeparated from the reſt of the world, we had the ſeparate intereſt of two or more kingdoms to engroſs our attention, and prevent us from ſeeing the connections that might be formed with the nations around us: But, as ſoon as theſe internal diſputes began to ſubſide, which in a great meaſure they did from the influence which the hope of ſucceeding Eliſabeth had upon the Scottiſh Mary, and her ſon James, this naval inclination broke forth with incredible force; and, cheriſhed from time to time by the improvements of commerce, the perfecting ſtroke was at laſt given by the union of the two kingdoms; from which time, this prevalence, this affection for maritime enterpriſe, has now produced a moſt aſtoniſhing effect.

It will be admitted, That, from the greater extent of coaſt, number of bays, dangerous ferries, and from our produce requiring an immenſity of ſea-carriage, a greater proportion of our inhabitants muſt be bred to a ſea-faring life than thoſe of other nations: That, in conſequence of the above cauſes, as well as from the nature of our tempeſtuous ſeas, rapid tides, or climate, it is to be expected that ſuch ſeamen ought to acquire a character ſufficient to encounter theſe difficulties, to which they muſt unavoidably and conſtantly be expoſed: This character may be allowed to conſiſt in *a thoughtleſs, but perſevering intrepidity*, which, without ſuch cauſes, will never exiſt any where elſe.

A prepoſſeſſion in favour of one's countrymen is both natural and commendable; but if ſuch countrymen, as before deſcribed, have uniformly performed great and glorious actions, are we not bound to believe, that ſuch men, being ſo diſtinguiſhed, muſt have been ſtamped with ſome extraordinary mark of character? And, whether this ſhould have ariſen from the nature of our tempeſtuous ſeas, our food, our climate, or our government, is not the object of our preſent Inquiry; it will be ſufficient that it does exiſt, and that the intrepidity of Britiſh ſeamen has long ſtood unrivalled.

The fame of theſe glorious actions having been recorded by ſuch able hiſtorians, it will be needleſs here to give more than a liſt, which, like

like an index, may point them out for the inſpection of ſuch as can have any doubt of what has been advanced.

Sir FRANCIS DRAKE deſtroys the Spaniſh fleet in the bay of Cadiz; takes by aſſault the caſtle of Cape St Vincent, with three other ſtrong holds; inſults Liſbon; and fortunately meets with and takes a rich Carrack, which he was lying in wait for.

THOMAS CAVENDISH, with three ſmall veſſels, adventuring into the South Sea, returns by the Cape of Good Hope loaded with riches.

The deſtruction of the Spaniſh Armada, in which the prudence of ſuſtaining a defence (by ſuffering that immenſe armament to waſte its force in a contention with the winds and waves), was as conſpicuous as the intrepidity with which the repeated attacks were made.

The expedition againſt Portugal, under DRAKE and NORRIS, who broke into the harbour of the Groine, deſtroyed the ſhipping, and defeated an army of five thouſand men; then ſailed to Liſbon, made themſelves maſters of the ſuburbs, and returned to Vigo, which they took and burned.

The EARL of CUMBERLAND's attempt at the Terceras.

LORD HOWARD being ſent with a ſquadron of ſeven ſhips to intercept the Weſt India fleet, was attacked by a Spaniſh ſquadron of fifty-five ſail. By the courageous obſtinacy of Sir Richard Greenville, the Vice-Admiral, who refuſed to make ſail with the reſt of the ſquadron, one ſhip was taken, being the firſt Engliſh man of war that had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards. This action of Sir Richard Greenville is ſo ſingular as to merit a more particular deſcription. He was engaged alone with the whole Spaniſh fleet, of fifty-five ſail, which had ten thouſand men on board; and from the time the fight began, which was about three in the afternoon, to the break of day next morning, he repulſed the enemy fifteen times, though they had continually ſhifted their veſſels, and boarded with freſh men. In the beginning of the action, he himſelf received an wound, but he continued doing his duty above deck till eleven at night, when, receiving a freſh wound, he was carried down to be dreſſed.

During

During this operation, he received a ſhot in the head, and the ſurgeon was killed by his ſide. The Engliſh began now to want powder; all their arms were broke or become uſeleſs; of their number, which was but a hundred and three at firſt, forty were killed, and almoſt all the reſt wounded; their maſts were beat over board, their tackle cut in pieces, and nothing but a hulk left, unable to move one way or other. In this ſituation, Sir Richard propoſed to the ſhip's company to truſt to the mercy of God, not to that of the Spaniards, and to deſtroy the ſhip, with themſelves, rather than yield to the enemy. The maſter-gunner, and many of the ſeamen, agreed to this deſperate reſolution; but others oppoſed it, and obliged Greenville to ſurrender himſelf priſoner. He died a few days after; and his laſt words were, 'Here die I Richard Greenville, with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true ſoldier ought to do, fighting for his country, his Queen, religion, and honour. My ſoul willingly departing this body, leaving behind the laſting fame of having behaved as every valiant ſoldier is in duty bound to do.' The Spaniards loſt in this ſharp, though unequal action, four ſhips, and about a thouſand men, and Greenville's veſſel herſelf periſhed ſoon after, with two hundred Spaniards on board.

Sir MARTIN FORBISHER's exploits and death before the harbour of Breſt.

The enterpriſe of JAMES LANCASTER againſt Fernambuco in the Brazils, when ſeeing the ſhore lined with great numbers of the enemy, he ordered his men to row their boats with ſuch violence againſt the ſhore as to ſplit them in pieces. By this bold action he both deprived his men of all hope of returning unleſs by victory, and terrified the enemy, who fled after a ſhort reſiſtance.

The ſecond affair of Cadiz, when ESSEX threw his hat into the ſea.

Mr Hume, when ſpeaking of theſe enterpriſes in Elizabeth's time, has theſe words: 'In every action the Engliſh, though they had long enjoyed domeſtic peace, diſcovered a ſtrong military diſpoſition; and the Queen, though herſelf a heroine, found more frequent occaſion to reproach her Generals for encouraging their temerity, than for countenancing their fear or caution.'

Eliſabeth

Eliſabeth herſelf, in a harangue before parliament, when ſpeaking of the Spaniſh Armada, ſaid, 'But I am informed, that when he, 'Philip, attempted this laſt invaſion, ſome upon the ſea coaſt forſook 'their towns, fled up higher into the country, and left all naked and 'expoſed to his entrance; but I ſwear unto you, by God, if I knew 'thoſe perſons, or may know of any that ſhall do ſo hereafter, I 'will make them feel what it is to be ſo fearful in ſo urgent a cauſe.' By this menace ſhe probably gave the people to underſtand, that ſhe would exerciſe martial law upon ſuch cowards.

Notwithſtanding the great attention which Eliſabeth unremittedly gave to the navy, yet, at her deceaſe, it conſiſted of forty ſmall ſhips only, of which number four did not exceed forty guns, and but two of theſe amounted to a thouſand tons; twenty-three others were below five hundred tons; the reſt, ſome were of fifty, and ſome even did not exceed twenty tons; and the whole number of guns belonging to this fleet were 774: If ſuch brilliant and glorious actions could have been performed by ſo inconſiderable a force, what might we not expect from our navy in its preſent ſtate? For the honour of the Engliſh, it muſt be remarked, that, while the Royal Navy conſiſted of theſe forty ſhips only, ſo great was the national ſpirit, and ſo much was it *united*, that an infinite number of other ſhips of war were ſoon fitted out, as well by private gentlemen, at their own expence, as by the different ſea ports.

One would have thought, however, that the Naval force ſhould not have encreaſed much during the reign of Eliſabeth's ſucceſſor, James, when it is conſidered, that the practice of the Engliſh merchants, then, was to carry on their trade in foreign bottoms; yet, from the 1582, when the number of ſeamen, upon a computation, amounted to 14295, until the year 1640, at the beginning of the troubles, that number was found to be tripled.

After an interval of twelve years, the Dutch war was the next occaſion of a farther diſplay of our Naval character. But, it muſt be obſerved, that, while the Engliſh ſeamen had been ſo often engaged, and generally ſucceſsful, in the leſſer battles, or rather enterpriſes, yet, till now, they had never been tried in the greater, where numbers of ſhips were aſſembled together. However, their innate intrepidity, ſo far from *forſaking them* on this new and unexperienced occaſion, ſeemed to be augmented, or rather to have been exalted to a ſtate of enthuſiaſtic fury, which was ſupported with an unremitting perſeverance during the courſe of three dreadful wars; in the firſt of

which we had nine pitched battles; in the ſecond five; and in the third five alſo; making in all nineteen general engagements; in one of which the fight was renewed for four days ſucceſſively; in another for three days; and in a third for two days; which may fairly be ſtated for ſix more, making, when taken together, twenty-five days of general actions. And, what would now be conſidered as ridiculous and impracticable, many of the officers appointed to the command of theſe fleets had never been in ſea-ſervice till they were paſt the age of 40, and ſome even of 50 years: Of the laſt number was Blake, who, although renowned for the many obſtinate battles he had been engaged in, particularly that in the Downs, where, having no more than fifteen ſhips, he did not refuſe the combat when attacked by forty-two ſhips of the enemy, led on by the great Van Trump. Yet in nothing was he more conſpicuous than his patriotic virtue. When, being in oppoſition to the party then in power, 'It is ſtill our duty,' he ſaid to the ſeamen, 'to fight for our country, into whatever hands 'the government may fall.'

In all of which enterpriſes, whether with the Spaniards or the Dutch, whether in making the attack on caſtles, ſhips in harbours, or encountering ſhip with ſhip in cloſe action, and formed in line of battle, we will find the Britiſh ſeamen invariably fired with ſuch enthuſiaſtic courage, that, whether equal or inferior in number, victorious or worſted, theſe battles, though not always deciſive, were conſtantly marked with ſtrong effect, ten, twenty, thirty, or more ſhips, being taken or deſtroyed, two thouſand men killed, and as many taken priſoners.

Therefore, without derogating from the gallant behaviour of the Dutch, which was equally diſplayed in theſe wars, from theſe proofs and examples we are bound to believe, that Britiſh ſeamen are, by Nature or habit, endued with ſome extraordinary mark of character.

And, though the ſpirits of the people might have been, for a little time, depreſſed by the unfortunate actions of Beachy-head and Bantry-bay, which were fought ſome time after; yet the natural impreſſions, ſo juſtly in favour of our ſeamen, ſoon recovered our confidence; which was ſo much encreaſed by the battle off La Hogue, that, many years afterwards, the victories off Mallaga and Meſſina were no more than we thought we had reaſon to expect.

The long intervals between theſe actions, and that of the war 1743, nowiſe abated the ſanguine impreſſions reſpecting our ſeamen. Much effect was expected from the powerful fleet ſent into the Mediterranean under the command of Matthews and Leſtock, who encoun-

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tered the combined fleets of France and Spain on the 11th February 1744. But, intending afterwards to give a more particular deſcription of this affair, we ſhall only add, that Matthews, who commanded, accompanied with the Marlborough and Norfolk, his two ſeconds a-head and a-ſtern, together with the Berwick in another place, broke out from the line of battle, got within a proper diſtance, and fought with great bravery; but, being ill ſupported by the reſt of the fleet, little more was done, than to ſhow what cannon ſhot, at a reaſonable diſtance, might effect. The two admirals mutually accuſed each other; and Matthews, in conſequence of a trial, was broke: But the late King, ſatisfied that he had fought like a brave man, without attending to the nice diſtinctions which had determined the court-martial, refuſed to confirm the ſentence.

Happily ſome other more favourable opportunities offered during the courſe of this war, in which, having a greater ſuperiority, we were more ſucceſsful. Theſe were the capture of the May fleet by Admiral Hawk; the voyage round the world by Lord Anſon; his bold attack of the Accapulco ſhip, ſo much his ſuperior in force; his capture of ſix French ſhips of the line and Indiamen in October.

Theſe, with the unremitting exertions in the many leſſer ſea-combats, removing the evil impreſſions made by the miſcarriage in the Mediterranean, we ſtill flattered ourſelves that the glory of the Britiſh flag was yet untarniſhed.

But, be that as it may, we could not, without ſome emotion, recal to mind theſe glorious, but tremendous battles with the Dutch, in which the ſpirited, but *united* exertion of our ſeamen had been ſo juſtly celebrated, that, when the laſt war broke out, our minds being ſo prepoſſeſſed with enthuſiaſtic partiality, there were but few of our countrymen who did not firmly believe, and truſt, that, if one Britiſh ſailor was not a match for two Frenchmen, he was at leaſt a very ſuperior being.

How great, then, was the diſappointment of the nation, when it was known, that Admiral Byng, commanding a Britiſh fleet of ſuperior force, in a general engagement with the French, without loſing a ſhip, almoſt without the loſs of a man, half of his fleet not having fired a ſhot, had acknowledged himſelf worſted by flying to Gibraltar, abandoning Minorca, and leaving the garriſon at the mercy of the enemy, who were then maſters of the ſea.

Meanwhile, it is with aſtoniſhment that we muſt remark the innumerable leſſer conflicts during the courſe of this war, where the uſual perſevering

perſevering courage and daring intrepidity were invariably exhibited in private as well as public ſervice, and generally of ſuch effect, that one or other of the combatants, of neceſſity, were obliged to ſtrike. A complete liſt of which, however acceptable, would be too great for the bounds of this work.

Though ſeveral fortunate and important affairs occurred during the courſe of this war, where numbers of ſhips were aſſembled, particularly that of Hawk with Conflans, where the enemy, though nearly equal, after diſcovering great want of determination, run away. But, as we had a great ſuperiority on all theſe other occaſions, excepting the one above mentioned, the deciſion that took place, by means of that ſuperiority, will never deſtroy the force of the general obſervation.

Again, while we remark the invariable exertions, and conſtant ſucceſs, attending the leſſer conflicts; while we remark how much, and how often, our ſhips have been put to ſevere trial, by being expoſed, in all weathers, during the ſtorms of winter, our enemy not daring to ſet out their heads; when, after recollection, we remark, that, to the numerous, bold, and ſucceſsful enterpriſes, *coups de mains*, performed during the laſt 250 years, our enemies have the ſingle diſgrace of Chatham to counterbalance ſo great an account.

Will we not at the ſame time remark, that this boaſted intrepidity, this perſevering courage of Britiſh ſeamen, this ſuperior ſtrength of conſtruction of our ſhips, has never once been brought to trial, where it ſhould have been of the greateſt importance; that is, in the greater engagements, and where, without it, the reſult has always been the ſame, namely, that, in ſuch actions, our fleets have been invariably baffled, nay worſted, without ever having loſt a ſhip, or almoſt a man?

While we remark theſe things, will it not be evident, will it not be admitted, that our enemy, the French, having acquired a ſuperior knowledge, have adopted ſome new ſyſtem of managing great fleets, either not known, or not ſufficiently attended to by us? That, on the other hand, we have perſiſted in following ſome old method, or inſtructions, which, from later improvement, ought to have been rejected? Or that theſe miſcarriages, ſo often, and fatally repeated, muſt have proceeded from a want of ſpirit in our ſeamen?

But as the mind, from the many inſtances given, both of public and private exertion, muſt revolt at this laſt ſuppoſition, it follows, that theſe

theſe repeated miſcarriages muſt have proceeded from one or other of the two firſt, or of both.

During the courſe of the wars with the Dutch, before mentioned, much improvement was made, particularly in the invention of ſignals. But the naval inſtructions, although founded upon experience and obſervation, and might be admirably fitted for fighting in narrow ſeas, where theſe battles were fought; yet, from later experience, it will be found, that they have been but ill qualified for bringing on an action with a fleet of French ſhips, unwilling to ſtand a ſhock, having ſea-room to range in at pleaſure, and deſirous to play off manoeuvres of defence, long ſtudied with the greateſt attention.

But, if it were poſſible that there could have remained a doubt of the truth or force of theſe obſervations before the breaking out of the preſent war, Will not this doubt be reſolved, if *they* ſhall be confirmed by every caſe that has followed ſince; and where our Admirals, whether by good fortune, by their ſkill in ſeamanſhip, or by the permiſſion of the enemy, have conſtantly acquired the advantage of the weather-gage, excepting in four rencounters afterwards to be mentioned? Caſes ſo far from operating againſt, muſt confirm the general obſervation, by proving, that the French, as one part of their ſyſtem, are reſolved never to be brought to make the attack, if it can otherwiſe be avoided.

Follows a liſt of the ſea-battles of the preſent war, according to the order in which they happened; which, for the ſake of illuſtration, will afterwards be more fully deſcribed.

That of ADMIRAL KEPPEL, off Uſhant, the 27th July 1778.

ADMIRAL BYRON, off Grenada, the 6th July 1779.

ADMIRAL BARRINGTON, at St Lucia.

Sir GEORGE BRIDGES-RODNEY captures the Spaniſh tranſports off Cape Finiſterre, takes the Spaniſh men of war off Cape St Vincent.

His battle with the French fleet, 17th April 1780.

His two rencounters with the ſame fleet, 15th and 19th of May 1780.

Admiral Arbuthnot, off the Cheſepeak, the 16th March 1781.

Sir Samuel Hood, off Fort Royal, Martinico, the 29th April 1781.

Admiral Parker, on the Dogar Bank, the 5th Auguſt 1781.

Commodore Johnston, St Julian's Bay.

Admiral Greaves, off the Cheſepeak, the 5th September 1781.

From all which, theſe three concluſions will naturally follow:

That, in bringing a ſingle ſhip to cloſe action, and in conduct during that action, the Britiſh ſeamen have never been excelled: That the inſtructions, by which is meant the method hitherto practiſed of arranging great fleets, ſo as to give battle, or to force our enemy, the French, to give battle upon equal terms, after ſo many and repeated trials, having been found unſucceſsful, muſt be wrong: And, on the other hand, that the French having repeatedly and uniformly followed a *mode* which has conſtantly been attended with the effect intended, they therefore muſt have adopted ſome new ſyſtem, which we have not diſcovered, or have not yet profited by the diſcovery.

But it may be aſked, Have the French ever effected any thing deciſive againſt us? Have they ever, in any of theſe rencounters, taken any of our ſhips? Have they ever, preſuming upon their ſuperior ſkill, dared to make the attack?—No. But, confident in their ſuperior knowledge in Naval Tactic, and relying on our want of penetration, they have conſtantly offered us battle to leeward, truſting that our headlong courage would hurry us on to make the cuſtomary attack, though at a diſadvantage almoſt beyond the power of calculation; the conſequences of which have always been, and always will be, the ſame, as long as prejudices prevent us from diſcerning the improvements made by the enemy, or our own blunders.

To be completely victorious cannot always be in our power; but to be conſtantly baffled, repeatedly denied the ſatisfaction of retaliation, almoſt on every occaſion, is not only ſhameful, but, in truth, has been the cauſe of all our late misfortunes.

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It may here not be improper to obſerve, That, though our apprehenſions of ſuffering in character and importance, as a Naval Power, might have been very great at the breaking out of the war with the Colonies, from the conception, that the later increaſe of that importance had ariſen alone from the growth of theſe colonies; from experience, from the great exertions made, and from the continuance of the war itſelf, it is clearly proved, that that increaſe muſt have ariſen from other reſources, which will every day more and more be found to exiſt in the Mother Country herſelf: And alſo, being aſſured by that exertion, ſo glorioufly and conſtantly exhibited in the leſſer conflicts, as well during the courſe of the preſent, as during the courſe of the two laſt wars, that the character of our ſeamen is as predominant as ever.

Hence, if ever the American Colonies accompliſh their wiſhed for ſeparation, Britain, by her force being more collected, and with theſe reſources, will yet be more powerful than ever.

DEMON-

DEMONSTRATIONS *.

AS it may now be admitted, that, in bringing a ſingle ſhip to action, and in conduct during that action, Britiſh ſeamen have never been excelled, it is aſked, What method have they followed? For example,

Suppoſe a ſingle Britiſh ſhip to windward at B, fig. 1. diſcovering an enemy's ſhip to leeward at F, Is it the practice for B, in making the attack, to bear directly down, endwiſe, on F? No. Becauſe, if B did ſo, the caſe would ſtand thus: Suppoſe the two ſhips of eighty guns each, the receiving ſhip F, by lying-to, as in fig. 2. would preſent a broadſide of forty heavy guns bearing upon B, during a courſe of two miles, in which every ſhot might take effect, while B, in this poſition, fig. 2. has it only in her power to bring the two light guns of her fore-caſtle, or bow-chace, to bear on F, a diſadvantage greatly exceeding twenty to one. But the receiving ſhip F, by lying broadſide to, will have all her maſts and rigging more open, and, conſequently, will allow ſhot to paſs with leſs effect; her men, alſo, will be leſs expoſed to the impreſſion of ſhot, as it muſt take the breadth of the ſhip only; whereas the ſhip B, coming endwiſe down, muſt be greatly affected by every ſhot that may take place in the extenſive area of her hull and rigging; the maſts and ſhrowds, from being ſeen in a line, and the whole ſpace, from the ſituation, being quadruply darkened with rigging,

* As it is by the influence of the wind alone that all the movements of ſhipping are performed, for this reaſon, as well as for rendering the following demonſtrations more ſimple, we have made the courſe of the wind to proceed from the top of the page in the plans hereto referred.

The Britiſh ſhips are diſtinguiſhed by a red colour, and letters of reference beginning with the alphabet and ending at E; and the ſhips of the enemy are diſtinguiſhed by a black colour, with letters beginning at F.

rigging, a ſhot taking place in that area, therefore, muſt carry away ſomething of conſiderable conſequence; and a ſhot taking place in the hull muſt rake the men from one end of the ſhip to the other: Which ſituation, or poſition of B to F, is underſtood to mean, that the ſhip B is raked by the ſhip F; and the conſequence would be, that B would be diſabled in her rigging, &c. long before ſhe could arrive at a proper poſition for annoying F; and, when ſhe has attained this poſition, F, by being entire in her rigging, will have it in her power to fight, or make off at pleaſure.

The method then is, B having the wind, will run down a-ſtern, as per dotted line, and getting into the courſe, or near the wake of F, or a poſition that will bring her parallel to the courſe of F, at a proper diſtance, ſhe will then run up cloſe along ſide of F upon equal terms, as in fig. 3.; or, otherwiſe, on ſhooting a-head, ſhe will wear, and run down on the weather bow of F, as in fig. 4. till ſhe ſhall force F to bear away to leeward, keeping cloſe by F on equal terms; but, during the courſe, in both caſes, carefully watching that F ſhall not have it in her power to bring her broadſide to bear upon B, without retaliation.

It having been often ſaid, that the French have made it a rule to throw the whole effect of their ſhot more particularly into the rigging of their enemy, and that the Britiſh, on the other hand, have been as attentive to point the force of their fire againſt the hull of the ſhip, it may be proper here to ſtate the two caſes, and compare the effect.

Let us ſuppoſe a ſhip of eighty guns wiſhing to avoid the effects of a cloſe engagement, but, at the ſame time, lying to, as in F, fig. 5. intending to receive, with every advantage, an enemy B, of equal force, and coming down with an intention to fight her; and let us ſuppoſe that F, by aiming her fire at the rigging of B, ſhall have carried away any of the principal ſtays, eight or ten windward ſhrewds, or a foretop maſt, or any other rigging, though of much leſs conſequence, but, at the ſame time, without having wounded a ſingle man of the ſhip B; and ſuppoſe a ſecond ſhip, conſort to F, receiving ſuch another ſhip as B, and by firing at her hull only, ſhall, without other damage, have killed thirty or forty of her men:

In this critical juncture, when F and her conſort are deſirous of avoiding a cloſe engagement, Which of the two ſhips of B will be moſt diſabled from following after, and cloſing with the enemy? Is it not evident, that it muſt be the ſhip which has loſt part of her rigging; for, as ſhe will not be able to make ſufficient ſail till after having been repaired, this neceſſary ſtoppage muſt be of greater conſequence at this time than if ſhe had loſt a hundred, or even two hundred of her com-

pliment of men ; the remainder being always ſufficient to navigate the ſhip.

Again, let the comparative bulk of the two objects be conſidered : The hull of a ſhip, taken by itſelf, on the one ſide, and the whole area of the maſts, rigging, and hull, taken on the other; and, as the killing and deſtroying of men may be the principal view in firing at the hull, ſuppoſe, for example, a ſhip of ſeventy-four guns, which has two decks, the breadth, or rather the heighth, of the line expoſed, which will comprehend both theſe decks, crowded with men, cannot exceed twelve feet, which ſum, multiplied by 120, the length of the ſhip, will give 1440 feet, the whole area of the vulnerable mark : But the area, comprehending the rigging and hull, of ſuch a ſhip, will give a ſurface twenty times theſe dimenſions.

As it has alſo been often ſaid, that ſome particular ſhip has been expoſed, in battle, to the cannonade of three, four, or even five ſhips, all extended in the enemy's line, and all bearing upon her at one and the ſame time, fig. 1. plate 2. is intended to prove, that this ſhip muſt have been at a very great diſtance before ſhe could have been expoſed to the fire of even three ſhips, ſuppoſing them to be extended in line of battle a-head, and at one cable's length aſunder. Suppoſe a line of battle, in which four or five ſhips are extended, as I, H, F, H, I, the ſpaces between each ſhip to be two hundred and forty yards, or one cable's length, and the length of each ſhip to be forty yards, ſo that the whole ſpace between head and head, of any two ſhips, is two hundred and eighty yards, and let the perpendicular line FK, proceeding right out from the beam of the middle ſhip F, be divided into a ſcale of ſix cables length, making in all a diſtance of 1440 yards :

Query. At what diſtance may any oppoſite ſhip of an enemy be expoſed to the fire of three ſhips bearing upon her at one and the ſame time, and let H, F, H, be the three ſhips lying-to, and extended in line of battle a-head ; and let the opponent ſhip be ſtationed in any of the lines drawn through the points E, C, G, and parallel to the line I, I?

From inſpection, it will be evident, that the opponent ſhip, ſtationed at the point E, 720 yards diſtant, cannot, for any length of time, be expoſed to the fire of more than the center ſhip F. For the ſhip H a-head, in *lying-to* in line of battle, will not be able to bring her head ſo much nearer the wind as to admit of her broadſide to bear on E. But, ſuppoſing this to be practicable, will ſhe not diſorder her own line by being thrown out of her ſtation, and will alſo leave her head expoſed to a raking fire from her oppoſites in the enemy's line ?

Neither

Neither will it be more proper for H, the ſhip a-ſtern, to bring her broadſide on E; for in doing this ſhe will run to leeward, and expoſe her ſtern to be raked by her oppoſites.

But, if the opponent ſhip cannot well be expoſed to the fire of the two ſhips, H, H, at the point E, ſhe muſt be ſtill leſs expoſed at the point C, 480 yards diſtant; and it will be almoſt impoſſible for the ſhips H, H, to touch her at the point G, 240 yards, or one cable's length diſtant.

But one cable's length aſunder is too ſmall an allowance for accidents that may happen to ſhips extended in line of battle a-head. Therefore, let us ſuppoſe I, F, I, to be the three ſhips exended at two cables length aſunder, or 480 yards between each of the three ſhips:

Then it will be evident, that, if the opponent's ſhip could not be much expoſed, at the point E, to the fire of the three ſhips, when at one cable's length aſunder, that, proportionally, ſhe would not be more expoſed at the point K, from the fire of the three ſhips now, when at two cables length aſunder, which is double the diſtance, or 1440 yards.

But, as ſhips cannot well be kept in line of battle at a leſs allowance than one and a half cable's length aſunder, it follows, that a ſhip muſt be at leaſt 1080 yards diſtant, before ſhe can be expoſed or annoyed by a cannonade from three ſhips extended in line of battle, and bearing upon her at the ſame time, which let be ſuppoſed at L.

Hence, it may be concluded, that, when it has been ſaid, that any ſhip has been expoſed to the fire of five, four, or even three ſhips of the enemy's line, that ſuch ſhip has been at a very great diſtance. For, from what has been ſaid, it will not be admitted, that either of the ſhips I, I, or H, H, a-head and a-ſtern of the principal F, will have time to bring their broadſides to bear directly upon the ſhip in queſtion; their attention, as is ſuppoſed, being too much engroſſed by their oppoſite ſhips in the enemy's line, at the points B, B, B, B, who aſſuredly would take the advantage then offered, and rake them fore and aft.

Having ſhown what is the method practiſed for bringing ſingle ſhips to fight upon an equality, let us now examine the manoeuvres that might be proper or improper for bringing great fleets to action.

For example: Let us ſuppoſe a fleet of ten, twenty, thirty, or more ſhips, of eighty guns each, extended in line of battle to leeward, and *lying-to* at F, fig. 1. plate 3. with the intention of avoiding an attack; and

and ſuppoſe another fleet at B, of equal number, and force of ſhips, alſo extended in line of battle, three or four miles to windward, and deſirous of making an attack, and coming to cloſe action, on equal terms, with the ſaid F:

From the demonſtration of the attack on a ſingle ſhip, plate 1. it muſt be evident, that, if the fleet B ſhall attempt to run down, headlong, ſhip for ſhip, upon the ſquadron F, as repreſented in fig. 2. each individual ſhip of B, having been expoſed, during a courſe of two miles, to a cannonade, at a diſadvantage of above twenty to one, muſt be diſabled long before it can reach ſuch a point of diſtance from F, as properly may be termed cloſe action, or even to reach a ſituation proper for annoying her antagoniſt in the line F.

Again, let it be ſuppoſed, that B, though much diſabled in his rigging, has made his ſhips bring-to at a diſtance from whence he can hurt F, fig. 3. is it to be expected that F, whoſe deſire has always been to avoid a cloſe engagement, and has already diſabled the ſhips of B, will patiently lie ſtill, or wait until B ſhall have time ſufficient to diſable him in his turn? Is it not evident that F, while unhurt, and in his power, before he may feel the effects of a cannonade from B, and while enveloped in his own ſmoke, as well as that of the enemy, will withdraw herſelf, by bearing away to leeward to attain a new ſituation, where he may be out of reach of cannon ſhot, out-ſailing B, who would be obliged to repair his rigging, before he can be in order to follow, and make a ſecond attack?

Again, ſuppoſe that B, in place of going headlong, and endwiſe down, ſhall attempt to run down in an angular courſe, or laſking, as it has been called, as in fig. 4. Is it not evident, that this will be a means of protracting the courſe of B; and, conſequently, the duration of the unequal cannonade from F, with the certainty of having his headmoſt ſhips expoſed to more than their ſhare of the damage?

But it is alſo evident from fig. 5. that, ſhould any ſhip in this angular line come to be crippled, her way being ſtopped, may, of conſequence, occaſion a confuſion amongſt the ſhips that are next a-ſtern, ſome running to leeward, while others are endeavouring to get to windward of the diſabled ſhip; and, while this point is ſettling, the time may be loſt, and, of conſequence, the neceſſary ſupport to the ſhips a-head, and ſo far ſeparated, may be too long retarded, as in the caſe of Mr Byng. But as it may be ſaid, that a ſtoppage of one ſhip a-head will not neceſſarily produce a ſtoppage in every ſhip a-ſtern, becauſe they may go to leeward of the diſabled ſhip: Anſwer. We have already given the preciſe caſe, as it happened to the Intrepid in

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Mr Byng's affair. Beſides, by the ſuppoſition, the ſhips a-head in the van may be now engaged, and, of conſequence, not having much headway, may be ſaid to be ſtationary; therefore, every ſhip a-ſtern, if ſhe ſhall attempt to bear down, as at D, D, from being confined to a determined courſe, muſt be brought into the poſition of being raked, when coming down before the wind, as in fig. 2. and, conſequently, of being completely diſabled long before ſhe can get cloſe enough alongſide of the enemy.

Again, the headmoſt ſhips, or van of B, having attained their ſtation at A, that is, a-breaſt of the van of F, as in fig. 5. and having begun the cannonade, F, whoſe conduct, or deſire, has always been to ſave his ſhips, has inſtructed, that, ſo ſoon as any of his ſhips, particularly the van, ſhall begin to feel the effect of a cannonade, that they ſhall immediately withdraw from danger.

From farther examination, it will alſo be evident, that, ſo ſoon as they deliver or throw in their fire upon the van of B; F has inſtructed, that each ſhip, one after another, ſhall bear away in ſucceſſion, as at H, to form a new line two or three miles to leeward. Again, Is it not evident, from this cautious conduct, that F, ſeeing the embarraſſment of B, and that his ſhips are diſabled, and his van unſupported, will, by making a crowd of ſail, endeavour to range paſt B, ſhip by ſhip, in ſucceſſion, till his whole ſquadron has poured in their fire upon the van of B; and that he, F, will then bear away to join his headmoſt ſhips, and form a new line of battle to leeward, at I, I, to be in readineſs to receive a ſecond attack, if B ſhall be ſo imprudent as to attempt it?

Is it not alſo evident, that, if any one or more ſhips of the ſquadron of F ſhall be crippled, they will have it in their power to quit their ſtation, being covered with ſmoke, at any time, and to fall to leeward, as at G, where they will be in ſafety? But, by the ſuppoſition and demonſtration, the ſhips of the ſquadron B muſt be crippled, and much ſeparated, long before they can get to their ſtation, whether the attack ſhall have been made in the perpendicular direction, as in fig. 2. or in the laſking manner, as in fig. 4. and 5.; therefore, in both caſes, B.'s van muſt inevitably be expoſed to the effect of the laſt deſcribed movement, which was, that F, perceiving the ſhips of B in diſorder, unſupported, and diſabled from following him, will make ſail, and diſcharge the fire of his whole line upon the van of B, ſhip by ſhip, as they paſs in ſucceſſion, and will form a new line to leeward, to be prepared, if another attack ſhall be made upon them.

Hence it appears, that a fleet, B, to windward, by extending his line of battle, with a deſign to ſtop and attack a whole line of enemy's ſhips to leeward, muſt do it at a great diſadvantage, and without hope of ſucceſs: For the receiving fleet, F, to leeward, unqueſtionably will have the four following advantages over him, which will be more particularly proved when we come to examine the real practice.

1*ſt*, The ſuperiority of a fire, above twenty to one, over the fleet B, while coming down to attack.

2*d*, That, when the ſhips of B are brought to at their ſtation, if it blows hard, the ſhot from F, by the lying along of the ſhips, will be thrown up into the air, and will have an effect at a much greater diſtance; whereas, on the other hand, the ſhot from B, from the lying along of the ſhips alſo, will be thrown into the water, and the effect loſt.

3*d*, That F will have the power of directing, and applying at pleaſure, the fire of his whole line againſt the van of B, who is now unable to prevent it, his ſhips being diſabled, ſeparated, and, therefore, unſupported.

4*th*, That F will alſo have a greater facility of withdrawing from battle the whole, or any diſabled ſhip of his line.

If, then, after a proper examination of the late ſea-engagements, or rencounters, it ſhall be found, that our enemy, the French, have never once ſhown a willingneſs to riſk the making of the attack, but, invariably, have made choice of, and earneſtly courted a leeward poſition: If, invariably, when extended in line of battle, in that poſition, they have diſabled the Britiſh fleets in coming down to the attack: If, invariably, upon ſeeing the Britiſh fleet diſabled, they have made ſail, and demoliſhed the van in paſſing: If, invariably, upon feeling the effect of the Britiſh fire, they have withdrawn, at pleaſure, either a part, or the whole of their fleet, and have formed a new line of battle to leeward: If the French, repeatedly, have done this upon every occaſion: And, on the other hand, if it ſhall be found that the Britiſh, from an irreſiſtible deſire of making the attack, as conſtantly and uniformly have courted the windward poſition: If, uniformly and repeatedly, they have had their ſhips ſo diſabled and ſeparated, by making the attack, that they have not once been able to bring them to cloſe with, to follow up, or even to detain one ſhip of the enemy for a moment; Will we not have reaſon to believe, that the French have adopted, and

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put in execution, ſome ſyſtem, which the Britiſh either have not diſcovered, or have not yet profited by the diſcovery?

To make this Inquiry with the greater advantage, we ſhall begin with thoſe battles which are moſt applicable to the ſubject, without attending to the dates, or order in which they were fought.

ADMIRAL BYRON's LETTER.

" It being my intention, from this intelligence, to be off St George's Bay ſoon after day-break, I drew the ſhips of war from among the tranſports, leaving only the Suffolk, Vigilant, and Monmouth, for their protection, under the orders of Rear-Admiral Rowley, who was intended to conduct the debarkment of the troops; but he was to join me with theſe ſhips, if I ſaw occaſion for their ſervice. One of the enemy's frigates was very near us in the night, and gave the alarm of our approach. Soon after day-light, (eight on Tueſday the 6th), the French ſquadron was ſeen off St George's, moſt of them at anchor, but getting under way, ſeemingly in great confuſion, and with little or no wind. The ſignal was immediately made for a general chace in that quarter, as well as for Rear-Admiral Rowley to leave the convoy; and, as not more than fourteen or fifteen of the enemy's ſhips appeared to be of the line, from the poſition they were in, the ſignal was made for the ſhips to engage and form as they could get up: In conſequence of which, Vice-Admiral Barrington in the Prince of Wales, with Captain Sawyer in the Boyne, and Captain Gardner in the Sultan, being the headmoſt of the Britiſh ſquadron, and carrying a preſs of ſail, were ſoon fired upon, at a great diſtance, which they did not return till they got conſiderably nearer. But the enemy getting the breeze of wind about that time, drew out their line from the cluſter they were lying in, by bearing away, and forming to leeward, on the ſtarboard tack, which ſhewed their ſtrength to be very different from our Grenada intelligence; for it was plainly diſcovered they had 34 ſail of ſhips of war, twenty-ſix or twenty-ſeven of which were of the line, and many of theſe appeared of great force. However, the general chace was continued, and the ſignal made for cloſe engagement; but our utmoſt endeavours could not effect that; the enemy induſtriouſly avoiding it, by always bearing up when our ſhips got near them; and I was ſorry to obſerve, that their ſuperiority over us, in ſailing, gave them the option of diſtance, which they availed themſelves of, ſo as

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to prevent our rear from ever getting into action; *and, being to leeward, they did great damage to the maſts and rigging, when our ſhot could not reach them.* The ſhips that ſuffered moſt were thoſe *the action began with*, and the Grafton, Captain Collingwood, the Cornwal, Captain Edwards, and the Lion, Captain Cornwallis. The ſpirited example of Vice-Admiral Barrington, with the former three, expoſed them to a ſevere fire in making the attack; and the latter three happening to be to leeward, ſuſtained the fire of *the enemy's whole line, as it paſſed on the ſtarboard tack.* The Monmouth likewiſe ſuffered exceedingly, by Captain Fanſhaw's having bore down, in a very gallant manner, *to ſtop the van of the enemy's ſquadron, and bring it to action.* But, from the very ſmart, and well directed fire kept up by theſe ſhips, and others that were engaged, I am convinced they did the enemy great damage, although *their maſts, rigging, and ſails, appeared leſs injured than ours* *. The four ſhips laſt mentioned, with the Fame, being ſo diſabled in their maſts and rigging as to be totally incapable of keeping up with the ſquadron, and the Suffolk appearing to have received conſiderable damage in an attack made by Rear-Admiral Rowley upon the enemy's van, I took in the ſignal for chace, but continued that for cloſe engagement, formed the beſt line which circumſtances would admit of, and kept the wind, to prevent the enemy from doubling upon us, and cutting off the tranſports, which they ſeemed inclined to do, and had the latter very much in their power, by means of their large frigates, independent of ſhips of the line. The French ſquadron tacked to the Southward, and I did the ſame, to be in readineſs to ſupport the Grafton, Cornwal, and Lion, that were diſabled, and a great way a-ſtern. But the Lion being likewiſe much to leeward, and having loſt her main and mizen top-maſts, and the reſt of her rigging and ſails being cut in a very extraordinary manner, ſhe bore away to the Weſtward when the fleets tacked, and, to my great ſurpriſe, no ſhip of the enemy was detached after her. The Grafton and Cornwal ſtood toward us, and might have been weathered by the French, if they had kept their wind, eſpecially the Cornwal, which was fartheſt to leeward, and loſt her main top-maſt, and was otherwiſe much diſabled; but they perſevered ſo ſtrictly in declining every chance of cloſe action, notwithſtanding their great ſuperiority, that they contented themſelves with firing upon theſe ſhips, when paſſing barely within gun-ſhot, and ſuffered them to rejoin the ſquadron, without one effort to cut them off.

* A ſtrong proof of the advantage of demoliſhing an enemy's rigging, in preference to the killing his men, or ſtriking the hull of his ſhip.

off. The Monmouth was ſo totally diſabled in her maſts and rigging, that I judged it proper to ſend directions, in the evening, for Captain Fanſhaw to make the beſt of his way to Antigua, and he parted company accordingly.

" When we were cloſe in with St George's Bay, the French colours were ſeen flying upon the fort and other batteries, which left no doubt of the enemy being in full poſſeſſion of the iſland. To diſlodge them was impracticable, conſidering the ſtate of the two fleets. I therefore ſent orders to Captain Barker, the agent, to make the beſt of his way with the tranſports to Antigua or St Chriſtophers, whichever he could fetch, intending to keep the King's ſhips between them and the French ſquadron, which, at the cloſe of the evening, was about three miles to leeward of us, and, I had no doubt, would at leaſt be as near in the morning: For, although it was evident, from their conduct throughout the whole day, that they were reſolved to avoid a cloſe engagement, I could not allow myſelf to think, that, with a force ſo greatly ſuperior, the French Admiral would permit us to carry off the tranſports unmoleſted; however, as his ſquadron was not to be ſeen next morning, I conclude he returned to Grenada.

" It is my duty, on this occaſion, to repreſent, that the behaviour of the officers and men of his Majeſty's ſquadron was ſuch as became Britiſh ſeamen, zealous for the honour of their country, and anxious to ſupport their national character. The marines, likewiſe, and troops that were embarked, with their officers, in the King's ſhips, behaved as brave ſoldiers; and, from the exemplary good conduct of thoſe who got into action; from the viſible effect which the briſk and well directed fire had upon the enemy's ſhips, and from that cool determined reſolution, and very ſtrong deſire of coming to a cloſe engagement, which prevailed univerſally throughout the ſquadron, I think myſelf juſtifiable in ſaying, that the great ſuperiority in numbers and force would not have availed the enemy ſo much, had not their advantage over us in ſailing enabled them to preſerve a diſtance little calculated for deciding ſuch conteſts."

The DESCRIPTION *of* ADMIRAL BYRON'S *BATTLE off Grenada, the 6th of July* 1779, *taken from the foregoing Letter* *.

F. fig. 1. The French fleet, as they were ſeen at day light off the town of St George, moſt of them at anchor, but getitng under way, and ſeemingly in confuſion, with little wind.

G. Frigates on the out-look.

B. The Britiſh fleet diſcovering them from windward.

B. fig. 2. The Britiſh now extended in line of battle a-head.

A. The three headmoſt ſhips under Vice-Admiral Barrington, carrying a preſs of ſale, in conſequence of the ſignal for general chace, were ſoon fired upon by the enemy, which fire was not returned till he got conſiderably nearer.

F. The enemy having now got the breeze of wind, are ſeen drawing out their line from the cluſter they were lying in, and forming to leeward on the ſtarboard tack.

B. fig. 3. The Britiſh fleet after the ſignal for cloſe engagement, which, with their utmoſt endeavours, they could not effect; the enemy induſtriouſly avoiding it, by always bearing up when our ſhips got near them, as at F. Their ſuperiority over us in ſailing gave them the option of diſtance, which they availed themſelves of, ſo as to prevent our rear from ever getting into action; *and, being to leeward, they did great damage to the maſts and rigging, when our ſhot could not reach them.* Though the three headmoſt ſhips A, were expoſed to a ſevere fire in making the attack, yet the Grafton, the Cornwal, and Lion, being farther to leeward, at C, and conſequently nearer the enemy, ſuffered moſt, *having ſuſtained the fire of the enemy's whole line as it paſſed them, to leeward*, upon the ſtarboard tack. The Monmouth alſo ſuffered conſiderably, by Captain Fanſhaw's having gallantly *bore down to ſtop the enemy's van, and bring it to action*, as did the Suffolk, in another attack upon the enemy's van.

B. fig. 4. The Britiſh fleet forming the beſt line that circumſtances would admit of, to prevent the enemy from doubling back upon us, and

* Britiſh, 21 ſhips, 1 frigate, with a fleet of tranſports. French, 26 ſhips, 7 frigates.

and cutting off our tranſports, which they ſeemed inclined to do, by means of their large frigates, as well as their ſhips of the line.

C. The Grafton and Cornwal left far a-ſtern.

E. The Lion, being much ſhattered, making off to leeward.

F. fig. 5. The enemy having tacked to the Southward, and upon the larboard tack.

B. The Britiſh, after having immediately got upon the ſame tack, to be in readineſs to ſupport the Grafton and Cornwal, who were diſabled, and had been left a great way a-ſtern, as at C. But the Lion, being much more ſhattered, had bore away to the Weſtward, as at E; and, to our great ſurpriſe, no ſhip of the enemy had been detached after her.

Mr Byron has been ſo explicit upon the ſubject already, that we have only to make uſe of his own words to be a compleat proof of the following advantages which a fleet to leeward has over an extended fleet, making the attack from windward, as before mentioned.

1*ſt*, By their ſuperiority of fire, the ſhips in the van were diſabled in coming down to the attack.

2*d*, By being to leeward, the enemy, he ſays, did great damage to our maſts and rigging, while our ſhot could not reach them, *by being thrown into the water.*

3*d*, The Cornwal and Lion, part of the van, from being ſeparated and unſupported, or being farther to leeward, as he ſays, they ſuffered moſt, having ſuſtained the fire of the enemy's whole line, as it paſſed to leeward.

4*th*, And is it not evident, as well from his letter, as from the deſcription, that the enemy, from their leeward ſituation, laid hold of that advantage, by ſtealing away at pleaſure?

EXTRACT

EXTRACT of a LETTER from ADMIRAL ARBUTHNOT, *20th March* 1781, *Linnehaven Bay.*

" On the 16th, at ſix A. M. the Iris made the ſignal for diſcovering five ſtrange ſail to the N. N. E. and ſoon afterwards hailed, that they were large ſhips ſteering for the Capes of Virginia, and ſuppoſed to be diſtant about three miles. I immediately concluded it muſt be the enemy I was in ſearch of, and accordingly prepared the ſquadron for battle, by forming the line a-head a cable's length aſunder, on a wind which was then freſh, and proceeding towards them with a preſs of ſail. At this time Cape Henry bore S. W. by W. diſtant about 14 leagues, wind at Weſt; the French bearing from us N. N. E.; the weather ſo hazy, that the length of the Britiſh line could ſcarcely be diſcerned.

" At a quarter of an hour after eight, A. M. the wind veered to N. W. by W. and ſoon after to N. by W. which gave the enemy the advantage of the weather-gage. About this time ſeveral of the enemy's ſhips were diſcovered to windward, manoeuvring to form their line.

" At twenty-five minutes after eight, the Guadalupe ranged up under our lee, bringing the ſame intelligence with that already given by the Iris, and was ordered to make ſail, and endeavour to keep ſight of the enemy.

" At thirty-five minutes after eight, I directed the Iris, by ſignal, to make ſail a-head, and keep ſight of the enemy, as the haze appeared to thicken. The Britiſh line was by this time completely formed, and cloſe hauled on the larboard tack.

" At twenty minutes after nine, the headmoſt of the French ſhips tacked, as did the reſt in ſucceſſion, and formed the line on the ſtarboard tack.

" At thirty-five minutes after nine, the weather being very ſqualy, I formed the line a-head, at two cables length aſunder.

" At a quarter of an hour after ten, I made the ſignal for the ſquadron to tack, the headmoſt and weathermoſt firſt, and gain the wind of the enemy.

" At a quarter of an hour after eleven, the headmoſt of the French line tacked; but one of them having miſſed ſtays, the reſt wore, and formed the line on the larboard tack.

" At forty minutes after eleven, I re-formed my line, at one cable's length aſunder.

" At

" At twelve o'clock, there being a proſpect of the van of my line reaching the enemy, the whole of my line tacked by ſignal, the van firſt, and the leading ſhip continued to lead on the other tack.

" At one o'clock, the French ſquadron having completed their form in a line a-head, conſiſting of eight two deckers, bore E. by S. the Britiſh line cloſe hauled, ſteering E. S. E. wind at N. E.

" At half an hour after one o'clock, the enemy being very apprehenſive of the danger and inconvenience of engaging to windward, from the high ſea that was running, and ſqually weather, wore, and formed their line to leeward of the Britiſh line.

" At two o'clock, the van of my ſquadron wore in the line; and, in a few minutes, the Robuſt, which led the fleet, and afterwards behaved in the moſt gallant manner, was warmly engaged with the van of the enemy. The ſhips in the van and center of the line were all engaged by half an hour paſt two, and by three o'clock the French line was broke; their ſhips began ſoon after to wear, and to form their line again, with their heads to the South-eaſt into the ocean.

" At twenty minutes after three, I wore, and ſtood after them. I was ſorry to obſerve the Robuſt, Prudent, and Europe, which were the *headmoſt* ſhips, and received the whole of the *enemy's fire* at their rigging, as they *bore down*, ſo entirely *diſabled*, and the London's main-top ſail yard being carried away, the two firſt unmanageable, lying with their heads from the enemy, as to be incapable of purſuit, and of rendering the advantage we had gained deciſive.

" At half an hour after four, the haze came on ſo very thick, as entirely to intercept the enemy from my view. The Medea joined me ſoon after, which I directed to follow, and obſerve the route of the enemy, while I proceeded with the ſquadron to the Cheſepeak, in the hope of intercepting them, ſhould they attempt to get in there."

The DESCRIPTION *of* ADMIRAL ARBUTHNOT'S *BATTLE off the Cheſepeak, 16th March* 1781 *.

F. fig. 1. The French fleet to windward, formed in line of battle on the larboard tack.

B. The Britiſh fleet to leeward, on the ſame tack, at twelve o'clock, and in hopes that their van would be able to reach the enemy.

F. fig. 2. The French fleet now formed to leeward, at half after one, having quitted their windward poſition G, from an apprehenſion of the danger and inconvenience there would be in engaging to windward, from the high ſea that was running, and the ſqually weather.

B. The Britiſh fleet in chace, keeping their wind.

F. fig. 3. The French extended in line of battle, and receiving the attack, by firing upon the van of the Britiſh, as they came down before the wind.

B. The Britiſh, who had wore at two o'clock, left their poſition at C, are now attempting to ſtop the van, and ſteering every ſhip upon his oppoſite of the enemy.

Mr Arbuthnot ſays, at two o'clock, the van of my ſquadron wore in the line, and, in a few minutes, the Robuſt, which led the fleet, and afterwards behaved in a moſt gallant manner, was warmly engaged with the van of the enemy.

Fig. 4. The ſhips in the van A, and the center B, of the line, were all engaged by half paſt two, and by three o'clock the French line was broke at FF.

Their ſhips began ſoon after to wear, and form their line again, with their heads to the South-eaſt, into the ocean, as at G, fig. 4.

Fig. 5. At twenty minutes after three, I wore and ſtood after them, as B, fig. 5. but was ſoon ſorry to obſerve the Robuſt, Prudent, and Europe, the headmoſt ſhips at A, as they had received the whole of

* Britiſh, eight ſhips and three frigates. French, eight ſhips and four frigates.

of the enemy's fire at their rigging, as they *bore down*, ſo entirely diſabled, as was alſo the London, who had her top-ſail yard carried away, that we were incapable of purſuit.

Although Mr Arbuthnot, in this battle, has had the merit of defeating this firſt attempt of the enemy to acquire a footing in the Cheſepeak, and of relieving us of our apprehenſions for the little army under General Arnold, the principal object of his deſtination, yet the force of the general obſervation will not be deſtroyed by the naval operations in the action itſelf. For, by his mode of attack, as well as by the attempt to ſtop the van of the enemy, his headmoſt ſhips were ſo diſabled, that they could neither get into cloſe action, nor purſue; whereas, on the other hand, the enemy being unhurt, and perceiving the diſorder of the Britiſh fleet, that they were diſabled from following them, and dreading the effects of their fire, *wore*, and formed a new line of battle to leeward, to be prepared to receive a new attack, ſhould the Britiſh Admiral attempt to make it.

EXTRACT of a LETTER from VICE-ADMIRAL GRAVES, *31ſt Auguſt* 1781, *off Sandy-hook.*

" I beg you will be pleaſed to acquaint my Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, that the moment the wind ſerved to carry the ſhips over the bar, which was buoyed for the purpoſe, the ſquadron came out; and Sir Samuel Hood getting under ſail at the ſame time, the fleet proceeded together on the thirty-firſt of Auguſt, to the Southward.

" The cruiſers which I had placed before the Delaware could give me no certain information, and the cruiſers off the Cheſepeak had not joined: The winds being rather favourable, we approached the Cheſepeak the morning of the 5th of September, when the advanced ſhip made the ſignal of a fleet. We ſoon diſcovered a number of great ſhips at anchor, which ſeemed to be extended acroſs the entrance of the Cheſepeak, from Cape Henry to the middle ground: They had a frigate cruiſing off the Cape, which ſtood in and joined them; and, as we approached, the whole fleet got under ſail, and ſtretched out to ſea, with the wind at N. N. E. As we drew nearer, I formed the line firſt a-head,

a-head, and then in ſuch a manner as to bring his Majeſty's fleet nearly parallel to the line of approach of the enemy; and, when I found that our van was advanced as far as the ſhoal of the middle ground would admit of, I wore the fleet, and brought them upon the ſame tack with the enemy, and nearly parallel to them, though we were by no means extended with their rear. So ſoon as I judged that our van would be able to operate, I made the ſignal to bear away and approach, and ſoon after, to engage the enemy cloſe. Somewhat after four, the action began amongſt the headmoſt ſhips, pretty cloſe, and ſoon became general, as far as the ſecond ſhip from the center, towards the rear. *The van of the enemy bore away, to enable their center to ſupport them*, or they would have been cut up. The action did not entirely ceaſe till a little after ſun-ſet, though at a conſiderable diſtance; for the center of the enemy continued to bear up as it advanced; and, at that moment, ſeemed to have little more in view than to ſhelter their own van, as it went away before the wind.

" His Majeſty's fleet conſiſted of nineteen ſail of the line; that of the French formed twenty-four ſail in their line. After night, I ſent the frigates to the van and rear, to puſh forward the line, and keep it extended with the enemy, with a full intention to renew the engagement in the morning; but, when the frigate Fortune returned from the van, I was informed, that ſeveral of the ſhips had ſuffered ſo much, that they were in no condition to renew the action until they had ſecured their maſts; we, however, kept well extended with the enemy all night.

" We continued all day, the 6th, in ſight of each other, repairing our damages. Rear-Admiral Drake ſhifted his flag into the Alcide, until the Princeſs had got up another main-top maſt. The Shrewſberry, whoſe Captain loſt a leg, and had the firſt Lieutenant killed, was obliged to reef both top-maſts, ſhifted her top-ſail yards, and had ſuſtained very great damage. I ordered Captain Colpoys of the Orpheus to take command of her, and put her into a ſtate for action.

" The Intrepid had both top-ſail yards ſhot down, her top-maſts in great danger of falling, and her lower maſts and yards very much damaged, her Captain having behaved with the greateſt gallantry to cover the Shrewſberry. The Montague was in great danger of loſing her maſts; the Terrible ſo leaky as to keep all her pumps going; and the Ajax alſo very leaky.

" In the preſent ſtate of the fleet, and being five ſail of the line leſs in number than the enemy, and they having advanced very much in the wind upon us during the day, I determined to tack after eight, to prevent

prevent being drawn too far from the Cheſepeak, and to ſtand to the Northward."

The DESCRIPTION *of* ADMIRAL GRAVES's *BATTLE off the Cheſepeak, the 5th of September* 1781 *.

F. fig. 1. The French fleet at anchor, and extended acroſs the entrance of the Cheſepeak, from Cape Henry to the middle ground, who, as ſoon as they perceived the Britiſh fleet approaching, got under ſail, and ſtretched out to ſea upon the larboard tack, as at G.

B. The Britiſh fleet advancing to the middle ground, but not till after the French had left it, formed in a line nearly parallel to that of the French at G.

B. fig. 2. The Britiſh fleet, after having advanced as far as the ſhoal upon the middle ground, as *per* courſe A, wore, and having ſtood after the enemy, are now upon the larboard tack, extended in line of battle a-head, and almoſt a-breaſt of them.

Fig. 3. Mr Graves ſays: 'So ſoon as I judged that our van would 'be able to operate, I made the ſignal to bear away, and approach as 'at B; and, ſoon after, to engage the enemy cloſe.'

Fig. 4. 'Somewhat after four, the action began amongſt the headmoſt 'ſhips, pretty cloſe, and ſoon became general, as far as the ſecond 'ſhip from the center, towards the rear. The van of the enemy bore 'away,' as at G, 'to enable their center to ſupport them,' as at F, fig. 4. 'or they would have been cut up.

'The action did not entirely ceaſe till after ſunſet, though at a con-'ſiderable diſtance; for the center of the enemy continued to bear up 'as it advanced, and that moment ſeemed to have little more in view 'than to ſhelter their own van, as it went away before the wind.'

Mr Graves might have added, that the French fleet, by making this movement, not only covered their own van as it went off, but they

* Britiſh, 19 ſhips, 7 frigates, and a fire ſhip. French, 24 ſhips. Frigates.

completely diſabled the van of the Britiſh, now ſeparated and unſupported, and who had been before greatly hurt in their rigging, by making the attack as they did, in ſo much that hardly a ſhip was able to ſtand after, and prevent the enemy from forming a new line to leeward.

The fleets continued in ſight of each other for five days ſucceſſively, and, at times, were very near; but ours had not ſpeed enough, in ſo mutilated a ſtate, to attack them, and they ſhowed no inclination to renew the action; but they generally maintained the wind of us, yet did not make uſe of that power.

Although it may be thought a digreſſion from our ſubject, we cannot help remarking the anxiety with which the French have avoided the battle upon this occaſion, that they might not again be prevented from accompliſhing their deſigns upon the Cheſepeak, formerly diſappointed by the battle with Mr Arbuthnot.

The battle of the unfortunate Mr Byng, off Minorca, laſt war, is ſo very ſimilar to this laſt of Mr Graves off the Cheſepeak, as well in its conſequences, as in the action itſelf, that it naturally falls to be examined next.

Admiral Byng's *BATTLE off Minorca, 20th May* 1756 *.

B. fig. 1. The Britiſh fleet, about one o'clock afternoon, upon the ſtarboard tack, and after they had weathered the French fleet F, then upon the larboard tack.

B. fig. 2. The Britiſh fleet edging or laſking down to attack the enemy F, lying to, to receive them.

A. The van of the Britiſh obeying the ſignal, by bearing away two points from the wind, but each ſhip ſteering upon her oppoſite in the enemy's line.

A. fig. 3. The five headmoſt ſhips of the Britiſh line *brought-to*, and engaged in a ſmart cannonade, but not till after having greatly ſuffered

* Britiſh, 13 ſhips, 4 frigates, 1 ſloop. French, 12 ſhips, 5 frigates.

ſuffered in their rigging by three broadſides received from the enemy, during a courſe of ſome miles, while, at the ſame time, they had it not in their power to make retaliation.

G. The fourth ſhip of the enemy having received ſome little damage, or being ſo inſtructed, as Mr Weſt has conjectured, bore away, that is, quitted the line, and, in a very little time after, the fifth ſhip H, then the two headmoſt, I, and, *laſtly*, the third ſhip, for the ſame reaſon, it is preſumed, followed their example, and quitted the line alſo, each ſhip, as ſhe went off, occaſioning repeated huzzas from the Britiſh Tars, who conceived that the ſuperiority of their fire had beat theſe ſhips out of their line.

While matters were going on after this manner in the van, the Intrepid, the ſixth ſhip of the Britiſh line, at B, having loſt her fore-top maſt, was ſo taken a-back, that her courſe was ſtopt. This, of conſequence, produced a diſorder and ſtoppage to the ſhips next a-ſtern, ſome deſigning to go to leeward, and others endeavouring to get to windward of the diſtreſſed ſhip, as at B.

Fig. 4. Meanwhile, the center and rear of the French, though at a great diſtance, had been buſy firing random ſhot, perceiving this diſorder in the Britiſh line at B, fig. 4. made ſail, and, with impunity, threw in the fire of their whole line, each ſhip as ſhe ranged paſt the van of the Britiſh; after which they bore away in ſucceſſion to join their own van, and form a new line of battle three miles to leeward, as in fig. 5. to be prepared, ſhould the Britiſh Admiral have any thought of making a ſecond attack.

This engagement of Mr Byng's being, in almoſt every reſpect, the ſame as the forementioned, we have only to look back to the obſervations already made upon thoſe of Mr Byron, Mr Arbuthnot, and Mr Graves.

EXTRACT

EXTRACT of a LETTER from ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE BRIDGES-RODNEY, *26th April* 1780, *off Fort-Royal Martinico.*

" In this ſituation both fleets remained till the 15th inſtant, when the enemy, with their whole force, put to ſea in the middle of the night; immediate notice of which being given me, I followed them; and, having looked into Fort-Royal Bay, and the road of St Pierre's, on the 16th we got ſight of them, about eight leagues to leeward of the Pearl Rock. A general chace to the North-weſt followed; and, at five in the morning, we plainly diſcovered that they conſiſted of twenty-three ſail of the line, one fifty gun ſhip, three frigates, a lugger, and a cutter. When night came on, I formed the fleet in a line of battle a-head, and ordered the Venus and Grey-hound frigates to keep between his Majeſty's and the enemy's fleets, to watch their motions, which was admirably well attended to by that good and veteran officer, Captain Ferguſſon.

" The manoeuvres the enemy made during the night indicated a wiſh to avoid battle, which I was determined they ſhould not, and therefore counteracted all their motions.

" At day-light, in the morning of the 17th, we ſaw the enemy diſtinctly beginning to form the line a-head. I made the ſignal for the line a-head, at two cables length diſtance. At forty-five minutes after ſix, I gave notice, by public ſignal, that my intention was to attack the enemy's rear with my whole force; which ſignal was anſwered by every ſhip in the fleet. At ſeven A. M. perceiving the fleet too much extended, I made the ſignal for the line of battle at one cable's length aſunder only. At thirty minutes after eight A. M. I made a ſignal for a line of battle a-breaſt, each ſhip bearing from the other N. by W. and S. by E. and bore down upon the enemy. This ſignal was penetrated by them, who diſcovered my intention, wore, and formed a line of battle on the other tack; I immediately made the ſignal to haul the wind, and form the line of battle a-head. At nine A. M. made the ſignal for the line of battle a-head, at two cables length, on the larboard tack.

" The different movements of the enemy obliged me to be very attentive, and watch every opportunity that offered of attacking them to advantage.

" The

" The manoeuvres made by his Majeſty's fleet will appear to their Lordſhips by the minutes of the ſignals made before and during the action. At eleven A. M. I made the ſignal to prepare for battle, to convince the whole fleet I was determined to bring the enemy to an engagement. At fifty minutes after eleven, A. M. I made the ſignal *for every ſhip to bear down, and ſteer for her oppoſite in the enemy's line*, agreeably to the 21ſt article of the additional fighting inſtructions. At fifty-five minutes after eleven, A. M. I made the ſignal for battle; a few minutes after, the ſignal that it was my intention to engage cloſe, and, of courſe, the Admiral's ſhip to be the example. A few minutes before one, P. M. one of the headmoſt ſhips began the action. At one P. M. the Sandwich in the center, after having received ſeveral fires from the enemy, began to engage. Perceiving ſeveral of our ſhips engaging at a diſtance, I repeated the ſignal for a cloſe action. The action, in the center, continued till fifteen minutes after four, P. M. when Monſ. Guichen, in the Couronne, in which they had mounted ninety guns, the Triumphant and Fendant, after engaging the Sandwich for an hour and a half, bore away. The ſuperiority of the fire from the Sandwich, and the gallant behaviour of her officers and men, enabled her to ſuſtain ſo unequal a combat; though, before attacked by them, ſhe had beat three ſhips out of their line of battle, had entirely broke it, and was to leeward of the wake of the French Admiral.

" At the concluſion of the battle, the enemy might be ſaid to be completely beat; but ſuch was the diſtance of the van and rear from the center, and the crippled condition of ſeveral ſhips, particularly the Sandwich, who, for twenty-four hours, was with difficulty kept above water, that it was impoſſible to purſue them that night without the greateſt diſadvantage. However, every endeavour was uſed to put the fleet in order; and, I have the pleaſure to acquaint their Lordſhips, that, on the 20th, we again got ſight of the enemy's fleet, and, for three ſucceſſive days, purſued them, but without effect, they uſing every endeavour poſſible to avoid a ſecond action, and endeavoured to puſh for Fort Royal, Martinico: We cut them off. To prevent the riſk of another action, they took ſhelter under Guadaloupe.

" As I found it was in vain to follow them with his Majeſty's fleet, in the condition they were in, and every motion of the enemy indicating their intention of getting to Fort Royal Bay, Martinico, where alone they could repair their ſhattered fleet, I thought the only chance we had of bringing them again to action, was to be off Fort Royal before them, where the fleet under my command now is, in daily ex-

pectation of their arrival. I have deſpatched frigates to windward and to leeward of every iſland, to give me notice of their approach."

DESCRIPTION of Sir George Bridges-Rodney's *BATTLE off the Weſt end of Martinico, the 17th of May* 1780 *.

F. fig. 1. The French fleet to leeward, at day-light, diſtinctly ſeen forming the line a-head, and upon the ſtarboard tack.

B. The Britiſh fleet to windward, thirty minutes after eight, formed in line of battle a-breaſt, and bearing down on the enemy, and after Sir George had given notice, by public ſignal, that his intention was to attack the enemy's rear with his whole force, which ſignal was anſwered by every ſhip in his fleet.

F. fig. 2. The French fleet in the act of wearing, and forming upon the larboard tack, having penetrated Sir George's ſignal.

B. The Britiſh fleet ſtill in line a-breaſt, bearing down.

B. fig. 3. The Britiſh fleet formed in line of battle a-head, at two cables length aſunder, on the larboard tack, the ſignal to haul the wind being previouſly made at nine o'clock.

F. The enemy lying-to to receive the attack.

B. fig. 4. The Britiſh fleet, fifty minutes after eleven o'clock, every ſhip of which bearing down, and ſteering for her oppoſite in the enemy's line, agreeable to the 21ſt article of the additional fighting inſtructions, according to the ſignal made for that purpoſe, and after Sir George's ſignal to prepare for battle, which was intended to convince the whole fleet that he was determined to bring the enemy to an engagement. In five minutes after, the ſignal for battle was given; and, in a few minutes after this laſt, the ſignal that it was his intention to engage cloſe, *and, of courſe, the Admiral's ſhip*, B, *to be the example.*

A. The Britiſh fleet extended in line of battle. A few minutes before one o'clock, one of the headmoſt ſhips at D began the action, and at one, the Sandwich, the Admiral's own ſhip, after having received ſeveral fires from the enemy, began to engage at C.

F. The enemy lying-to as before.

Fig.

* Britiſh, 20 ſhips of the line, 1 fifty and 4 frigates. French, 25 ſhips, 8 frigates.

Fig. 5. The action continued above three hours, when Monſ. Guichen in the Couronne, mounting ninety guns, the Triumphant, and the Fendant, after engaging the Sandwich B, for an hour and a half, bore away, as at F, the ſuperior fire from the Sandwich enabling her to ſuſtain ſo unequal a combat, though, before ſhe was attacked by them, ſhe had beat three ſhips G, out of the line of battle, had entirely broke it, and was to leeward of the wake of the French Admiral. At the concluſion of the battle, the enemy might be ſaid to be completely beat. But ſuch was the diſtance of the van D, and rear A, from the center B, and the crippled condition of ſeveral ſhips, particularly the Sandwich, that we could not purſue the enemy.

Though Sir George had the merit of great perſonal courage upon this occaſion, yet, it muſt be admitted, that the attack, as put in execution, being the ſame, was, of courſe, attended with the like want of effect, which, unfortunately, has uniformly marked all our other ſea-battles. For, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid, he could not prevent the wary Frenchmen from ſliding away from him almoſt unhurt, while he got his ſhips ſo greatly diſabled that he could not *follow up*, or even detain a ſingle ſhip of the enemy for one moment. It is in vain, therefore, to lay the blame of this miſcarriage upon the ſuppoſed diſtance of the van and rear; for, if both had been completely cloſed with the center, from our hypotheſis, as well as from the examples given, we have a right to conclude, that the van and rear of the French fleet might, as uſual, have ſlid away with the ſame eaſe as the center had done, as ſoon as they perceived themſelves in any danger of being hurt.

Sir George has firſt told us, that he had given notice, by public ſignal, that his intention was to attack the enemy's rear with his whole force; and then he afterwards ſays, at eleven o'clock, A. M. I made the ſignal for every ſhip to bear down, and ſteer for her oppoſite in the enemy's line. Why did Sir George change his reſolution?

Had he carried the intention of his firſt ſignal into execution *, it is more than probable that he might have taken or deſtroyed ſix or eight ſhips at leaſt of the enemy's rear; but, by carrying down his whole line, every ſhip ſteering upon his oppoſite, according to the intention of the laſt ſignal, he might have been aſſured of getting every ſhip ſo diſabled

* It has been ſaid, that the French Admiral, upon perceiving the approach of the Britiſh fleet, according to the firſt intention, broke out with an exclamation, That ſix or ſeven of his ſhips were gone!

diſabled by the raking fire of the enemy, as to be incapable of any future purſuit.

Having now given five examples where the Britiſh, in diſplay of their innate deſire of making the attack, have always attained the windward poſition, and where this attack has always been made in an extended line, where little ſupport could be given to any individual ſhip, and where each ſhip in that line was ſteered down upon her oppoſite of the enemy, and where an idea of making the attack upon the enemy's van, in preference to an attack upon the rear, has generally prevailed:

On the other hand, the French having as earneſtly courted and attained the leeward ſituation, and, in conſequence thereof, have always diſabled the Britiſh fleet who made the attack in the extended line:

We proceed to give other examples where the French fleet, keeping to windward, have clearly ſhown their great diſlike, as well of making the attack themſelves, as of ſuffering the Britiſh fleet to approach them while in this windward ſituation.

EXTRACT of a LETTER from ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE BRIDGES-RODNEY, *31ſt May* 1780, *dated Carliſle-bay.*

" Since my letter of the 26th of April from Fort-Royal Bay, ſent expreſs by the Pegaſus, I muſt deſire you will pleaſe to acquaint their Lordſhips, that, after greatly alarming the iſland of Martinico, whoſe inhabitants had been made to believe his Majeſty's fleet had been defeated, but were ſoon convinced to the contrary by its appearance before their port, where it continued till the condition of many of the ſhips under my command, and the lee currents, rendered it neceſſary for the fleet to anchor in Chocque Bay, St Lucie, in order to put the wounded and ſick men on ſhore, and to water and refit the fleet; frigates having been detached both to windward and to leeward of every iſland, in order to gain intelligence of the motions of the enemy, and timely notice of their approach towards Martinico, the only place they could refit at in theſe ſeas. Having landed the wounded and ſick men, watered and refitted the fleet, on the 6th of May, upon receiving intelligence

telligence of the enemy's approach to windward of Martinico, I put to ſea with nineteen ſail of the line, two fifty gun ſhips, and ſeveral frigates.

" From the 6th to the 10th of May, the fleet continued turning to windward between Martinico and St Lucia, when we got ſight of the French fleet, about three leagues to windward of us, Point Saline on Martinico then bearing N. N. E. five leagues, Captain Affleck, in the Triumph, joining me the ſame day.

" The enemy's fleet conſiſted of twenty-three ſail of the line, ſeven frigates, two ſloops, a cutter and a lugger. Nothing could induce them to riſk a general action, though it was in their power daily: They made, at different times, motions which indicated a deſire of engaging; but their reſolution failed them when they drew near; and, as they ſailed far better than his Majeſty's fleet, they, with eaſe, could gain what diſtance they pleaſed to windward.

" As they were ſenſible of their advantage in ſailing, it emboldened them to run greater riſks, and approach nearer to his Majeſty's ſhips than they would otherwiſe have done; and, for ſeveral days, about two in the afternoon, they bore down in a line of battle a-breaſt, and brought to the wind a little more than random ſhot diſtance.

" As I watched every opportunity of gaining the wind, and forcing them to battle, the enemy, on my ordering the fleet to make a great deal of ſail, on the 15th, upon a wind, had the vanity to think we were retiring, and with a preſs of ſail approached us much nearer than uſual. I ſuffered them to enjoy the deception, and their van ſhip to approach a-breaſt of my center, when, by a lucky change of wind, perceiving I could weather the enemy, I made the ſignal for the third in command, who then led the van, to tack with his ſquadron, and gain the wind of the enemy. The enemy's fleet inſtantly wore, and fled with a crowd of ſail.

" His Majeſty's fleet, by this manoeuvre, had gained the wind, and would have forced the enemy to battle, had it not at once changed ſix points, when near the enemy, and enabled them to recover that advantage. However, it did not enable them to weather his Majeſty's fleet ſo much, but the van, led by that good and gallant officer, Captain Bower, about ſeven in the evening, reached their center, and was followed by Rear-Admiral Rowley's ſquadron, who then led the van, the center and rear of his Majeſty's fleet following in order.

" As the enemy were under a preſs of ſail, none but the van of his Majeſty's fleet could come in for any part of the action, without

 waſting

waſting his Majeſty's powder and ſhot. The enemy wantonly expended a deal of theirs at ſuch a diſtance as to have no effect.

" The Albion, Captain Bower, and the Conqueror, Rear-Admiral Rowley, were the ſhips that ſuffered moſt in this rencounter. But I am ſure, from the ſlackneſs of their fire, in compariſon to that of the van of his Majeſty's fleet, the enemy's rear muſt have ſuffered very conſiderably.

" The enemy kept an awful diſtance till the 19th inſtant, when I was in hopes that I ſhould have weathered them, but had the mortification to be diſappointed in theſe hopes; however, as they were convinced their rear could not eſcape action, they ſeemed to have taken a reſolution of riſking a general one; and, when their van had weathered us, they bore away along our line to windward, and began a heavy cannonade, but at ſuch a diſtance as to do little or no execution; however, their rear could not eſcape being cloſely attacked by the ſhips of the van, then led by Commodore Hotham; and, with pleaſure I can ſay, that the fire of his Majeſty's ſhips was far ſuperior to that of the enemy, who muſt have received great damage by the rencounter.

" The Albion and Conqueror ſuffered much in this laſt action, and ſeveral other ſhips received conſiderable damage; a liſt of which, as likewiſe of the killed and wounded, I have the honour to incloſe.

" The purſuit of the enemy had led us forty leagues directly to windward of Martinico; and, as the enemy had ſtood to the northward with all the ſail they could poſſibly preſs, and were out of ſight the 21ſt inſtant, the condition of his Majeſty's ſhips being ſuch as not to allow a longer purſuit, I ſent the Conqueror, Cornwal, and Boyne, to St Lucia, and ſtood with the remainder of his Majeſty's ſhips towards Barbadoes, in order to put the ſick and wounded on ſhore, and repair the ſquadron."

DESCRIP-

DESCRIPTION of SIR GEORGE BRIDGES-RODNEY'S *RENCOUNTER with the French fleet, to windward of Martinico, the 15th May* 1780, *taken from the above Letter of the 31ſt May* 1780.

B. fig. 1. The Britiſh fleet extended in line of battle to leeward, and endeavouring to get to windward.

F. The French fleet, for ſeveral days, about the hour of two in the afternoon, bore down in a line of battle a-breaſt, as at F, and brought to the wind a little more than random ſhot diſtance, as at G.

Fig. 2. The French, upon the 15th May, having imagined that the Britiſh were retiring, came down with a preſs of ſail, and approached nearer than uſual, as at F, firſt poſition.

B. The Britiſh fleet in firſt poſition.

Sir George ſays, " I ſuffered them to enjoy the deception, and their van ſhips to approach *a-breaſt* of my center at B, when, by a lucky change of wind, (vide I.) perceiving I could weather the enemy, I made the ſignal for the van to tack, as at C, and gain the wind of the enemy. The enemy's fleet inſtantly wore, as at GG, and fled with a crowd of ſail on the contrary tack, as at H."

B. fig. 3. The Britiſh fleet having now gained the wind, (vide I.) would have forced the enemy to battle, had not the wind at once changed ſix points to K, when near the enemy, which enabled them to recover the weather-gage, as in fig. 4.

F. fig. 4. The French recovering the weather-gage, the wind having changed from I back to K.

G. The former line of courſe of the French fleet when the wind was at I.

B. The Britiſh van having now loſt the weather-gage, by the wind changing from I to K, and endeavouring to reach the center of the French line.

C. The line of the Britiſh courſe before the wind changed.

Sir

Sir George ſays, the van, led by Captain Bower, about ſeven in the evening, reached the enemy's center, and was followed by Rear-Admiral Rowley's ſquadron, who then led the van, the center and rear of his Majeſty's fleet following in order. As the enemy were under a preſs of ſail, none but the van of the Britiſh fleet could come in for any part of the action, without waſting powder and ſhot; the enemy wantonly expending a deal of theirs at ſuch a diſtance as to have no effect.

* The enemy kept an awful diſtance till the 19th inſtant, ſays Sir George, when I was again in hopes that I ſhould have weathered them; but I had the mortification to be diſappointed in theſe hopes; however, as they were convinced their rear could not eſcape action, they ſeemed to have taken a reſolution of riſking a general one; and, when their van had weathered us, they bore away, along our line, to windward, as in fig. 2.

F. fig. 2. The French van having weathered the Britiſh, bore away, along the line, to windward, and began a heavy cannonade, but at ſuch a diſtance as to do little or no execution; however, their rear G, could not eſcape being cloſely attacked by the ſhips of the Britiſh van B, led by Commodore Hotham. Sir George ſays, it is with pleaſure I can ſay, that the fire from the Britiſh ſhips was far ſuperior to that of the enemy, who muſt have received great damage by the rencounter.

It is remarkable, in theſe two laſt affairs, that the French, contrary to their uſual practice, have kept a windward ſituation. However, it will be evident, from Sir George's letter, that, as it was their earneſt deſire to get back to Fort-Royal without being farther hurt, ſo they neglected no manoeuvre to accompliſh their object; and the feints which they made of approaching the Britiſh fleet for four or five days running, could be intended only as an attempt to throw the Admiral off his guard: Therefore, as neither of theſe affairs can be conſidered as any thing more than accidental rencounters, our general obſervations will remain with the ſame force as before, and will confirm us in the belief, that the French will never be induced, in prejudice of their object in view, either to make or ſuſtain an attack, if it can poſſibly be avoided, whether that object ſhall be the getting back to a port, an attack upon a particular place, the ſaving of their fleet in general, or the preſerving of it entire to the concluſion of the war.

EXTRACT

* See fig. 1. B. Britiſh. F. French.

EXTRACT of a LETTER from REAR-ADMIRAL SIR SAMUEL HOOD, *4th May* 1781.

" Saw nothing of the enemy or Amazon at day-light: A little before nine the Amazon joined me, the enemy then in ſight, coming down between Point Salines and the Diamond Rock; made the ſignal for a cloſe line, and to prepare for action. At nine the enemy appeared forming the line of battle. Twenty minutes paſt nine, the Prince William joined me from Groſs Iſlet Bay; and, as I ſent for her but the night before, Captain Douglas's exertion muſt have been great, and does him much credit, to be with me ſo ſoon, having the greateſt part of his crew to collect in the night. Twenty-ſeven minutes paſt nine, hoiſted our colours, as did the French Admiral and his fleet. At fifteen minutes paſt ten, made the Shrewſbury's ſignal to alter her courſe to windward, ſhe being the leading ſhip, but ſoon perceived the wind had ſhifted, and that ſhe was as cloſe to the wind as ſhe could lie. At thirty-five minutes paſt ten, tacked the ſquadron altogether, the van of the enemy being almoſt a-breaſt of our center, and at eleven began to fire, which I took no notice of. At this time the ſhips in Fort-Royal Bay ſlipped their cables, and got under ſail. At twenty minutes paſt eleven I tacked the ſquadron altogether, and repeated the ſignal for a cloſe order of battle. At twenty-five minutes paſt eleven, finding the enemy's ſhot to go over us, hoiſted the ſignal for engaging, and, in paſſing our van and the enemy's rear, exchanged ſome broadſides. At forty minutes after eleven, the enemy tacked. At forty-five minutes after eleven, made the ſignal for the rear to cloſe the center. At fifty-five minutes paſt eleven, finding it impoſſible to get up to the enemy's fleet, I invited it to come to me, by bringing the ſquadron to under their top-ſails. At half paſt twelve, the French Admiral in the Bretagne began to fire at the Barfleur, which was immediately returned, and the action became general, but at too great a diſtance; and, I believe, never was more powder and ſhot thrown away in one day before; but it was with Monſ. de Graſſe the option of diſtance lay; it was not poſſible for me to go nearer. At one I made the ſignal for the van to fill, the French having filled, and drawing a-head. At ſeventeen minutes paſt one, made the Shrewſbury's ſignal, the leading ſhip, to make

more ſail, and ſet the top-gallant ſails. At thirty-four minutes paſt one, repeated the ſignal for a cloſe line of battle, and finding not one of ten of the enemy's ſhot reach us, I ceaſed firing; the enemy did the ſame ſoon after; but their van and ours being ſomewhat nearer, continued to engage; and, though the French Admiral had ten ſail aſtern of him, and three others to windward, he did not make a nearer approach. The merchant ſhips, at this time, were hauling in cloſe under the land, attended by two ſhips of two decks, ſuppoſed to be armed en flute, and two frigates. At eighteen minutes paſt three, the firing ceaſed between our van and that of the enemy; made the Shrewſbury's ſignal to make more ſail, in order to get to windward of the enemy. At forty-five minutes paſt four, ſent Captain Finch to the Shrewſbury to order Captain Robertſon to keep as near the wind, and carry all the ſail he could, ſo as to preſerve the line of battle, and to return back along the line, to acquaint every Captain of the ſame. At fifty-ſeven minutes paſt five, the packet going to Antigua, which had kept company with the ſquadron, came within hail, to acquaint me, by order of Rear-Admiral Drake, that the Ruſſel was in great diſtreſs, having received ſeveral ſhot between wind and water; that the water was over the platform of the magazine, and gaining upon the pumps; and that three of their guns were diſmounted. At eighteen minutes paſt ſix, made the Ruſſel's ſignal to come within hail, which was anſwered; the enemy's fleet, conſiſting of twenty-four ſail of the line, at this time, about four miles to windward. At half paſt ſeven, Captain Sutherland of the Ruſſel came on board, whom I ordered, if he could poſſibly, by exertion, keep the ſhip above water, to proceed to St Euſtatius, or any other port he could make, and acquaint Sir George Rodney of all that paſſed. At forty-five minutes paſt nine, the Lizard came within hail, to inform me, by the deſire of Captain Sutherland, that he had bore away.

" On Monday, April 30th, at day-light, found the van and center of the ſquadron ſeparated at ſome diſtance from the Barfleur and rear, owing to fluttering winds and calms in the night, which would not allow us to keep the Barfleur's head the right way, and ſhe went round and round two or three times, while the other ſhips had light airs; and, finding the enemy's advanced ſhips ſteering for our van, made all poſſible ſail towards them, and threw out the ſignal for a cloſe line of battle, the enemy's line being a good deal extended and ſcattered. At ſeven, the ſquadron under my command being pretty well formed, the enemy's advanced ſhips hauled off. At fifty-ſix minutes paſt ſeven, made the ſignal for the rear to cloſe the center, as the enemy ſeemed to ſhow

a diſpoſition to attack it. At thirty-five minutes paſt eight, having very light airs of wind, the ſquadron was thrown nearly into a line a-breaſt; made the ſignal for continuing in that form, leſt, by endeavouring to regain the line a-head, it might become extended. At eleven, made the ſignal for a line a-head, at two cables length aſunder, the wind backing to the eaſtward, favoured my forming in that order, the better to receive the enemy, then about three miles to windward. At fourteen minutes paſt eleven, made the ſignal for the rear to cloſe the center. At twelve, falling little wind again, and all the ſhips being thrown into a line a-breaſt, made a ſignal for a line a-breaſt, to keep the ſquadron as cloſe together as poſſible. At twenty-five minutes paſt twelve, the wind blowing ſteady at S. E. made the ſignal for a general chace to windward, with a deſign of weathering the enemy, which I ſhould certainly have ſucceeded in, had the breeze continued; but the wind dying away at four, I found it impracticable to weather the enemy, and, therefore, made the ſignal for a line a-head; and, having been informed that the Intrepid made ſo much water they could ſcarce keep her free, and that the Centaur was in the ſame ſtate, owing to the number of ſhot between wind and water, and that her lower maſts were very badly wounded, I judged it improper to dare the enemy to battle any longer; and, therefore, thought it my indiſpenſible duty to bear up, and made the ſignal for it at eight o'clock. At ten, brought to for the ſquadron to cloſe; at forty minutes paſt ten made ſail. At five A. M. the 1ſt inſtant, ſaw the enemy's fleet a-ſtern, about eight or nine miles diſtant. At twenty-ſix minutes paſt five, brought to for the Torbay and Paccahunta, to come up, which were then within reach of the enemy's guns, and the former received a good deal of damage in her maſts and rigging. At forty-five minutes paſt ſeven, the enemy ceaſed firing upon the Torbay; ſent the Amazon to tow the Paccahunta up. At eight, made the ſignal for a cloſe line, bearing north and ſouth of each other. At twenty minutes paſt twelve, made the ſignal, and brought to upon the larboard tack, and made the ſignal for the ſtate and condition of the ſquadron, the enemy bearing eaſt, ſtanding to the northward; 33 minutes paſt three, made the ſignal for a cloſe line north and ſouth. At four, the enemy tacked to the ſouthward, and were ſtanding that way at ſun ſet. In the evening, though it was almoſt calm, the main top-maſt of the Intrepid fell to pieces over the ſide. At ſeven, made ſail to the northward, it being the opinion of the officers of the ſquadron, acquainted with this country, that it was the only way of getting to windward, as the currents run very ſtrong to leeward, to the ſouthward of St Vincents."

The

The conduct of the French, in this affair with Sir Samuel Hood, is much the ſame with the two laſt of Sir George Rodney's. It is the third time, where, contrary to their eſtabliſhed practice, *they have kept the wind.* But, aware of the danger of this poſition, they approached ſo near the Britiſh only, as to be able to amuſe them with a diſtant cannonade, while their merchant ſhips and tranſports might, with ſufficient ſecurity, get into port.

Beſides the above object, and the uſual unremitting attention to the ſafety of their ſhips, they had to ſecure an eaſy acceſs, by keeping to windward of their port; from which the armaments for carrying into execution the great ſchemes they had then in contemplation, were to be fitted out; the firſt of theſe having already unfortunately taken place in the Cheſepeake.

From this battle, we may judge of the propriety of cannonading, even where there may be the ſmalleſt chance of reaching an enemy. For, notwithſtanding the great diſtance of the two fleets, and though the French were to windward; yet many of their ſhot took place in the hulls of our ſhips, ſo far below the water-line, that three of them could, with difficulty, be kept above.

ADMIRAL KEPPEL'S *BATTLE off Uſhant, July* 27. 1778 *.

B. fig. 1. The Britiſh fleet, at ſix o'clock in the morning, ſtanding upon a wind upon the larboard tack, and lying up about W. by N.; that is, with their heads northwards, and ranging between the fleet of the enemy and their port of Breſt.

F. The French fleet to windward, and nearly weſt, having kept that ſituation for four days before, as mentioned in Mr Keppel's letter; they had their heads alſo to the north.

A. At ten o'clock, the whole Britiſh fleet tacked together, and ſtood for the enemy, after having run through the dotted lines, their ſuppoſed courſe, and now upon the ſtarboard tack, with their heads ſouthward.

C. The Britiſh fleet advancing in as regular a line as the purſuit would admit; and the van having neared the enemy, a firing began between the headmoſt ſhips of both fleets about eleven o'clock.

While

* Britiſh, 30 ſhips, 6 frigates. French, 28 ſhips.

While the Britiſh fleet was going through theſe movements, a ſquall of wind, attended with rain, aroſe, which prevented either fleet from ſeeing each other's motions; during which time, that is, from ſix o'clock, till half an hour after ten, the French had firſt ſtretched away north, on the larboard tack, to G, where they tacked, then returned on a ſtarboard tack to the ſouth, as far as H; here they attempted a ſecond tack, but ſome ſhips miſſing ſtays, from the effect of the ſquall, they wore altogether, and were got again with their heads to the north, when the weather cleared up, and diſcovered the Britiſh fleet hard upon them, but on contrary tacks: The wind veering a little about to the South in this critical moment, favoured the fleet of the French, by enabling them to lie better up, while, of courſe, the Britiſh fleet fell off.

B. fig. 2. The van of the Britiſh, after having got as near as they choſe, each ſhip, as ſoon as it came within gun-ſhot, bore away, and run along the line of the enemy, firing at each ſhip in paſſing; the whole fleet following the ſame example.

F. Shows the courſe of the French, wiſhing to avoid the battle, and taking the advantage of the wind, now more ſoutherly, by which means the rear of the Britiſh was able to fetch the center of their fleet only, while, at the ſame time, the French van was now far to windward, and preparing to wear, and run to leeward of the Britiſh fleet.

B. fig. 3. The Britiſh Admiral, in the Victory, together with other ſhips of his diviſion, after having paſſed the rear of the French, in the act of wearing, to return to the ſupport of their rear, or to give chace to the enemy.

A. The Formidable, Sir Hugh Palliſer's ſhip, after having fetched, and given and received a broadſide with the French Admiral, and other ſhips, as ſhe paſſed along the line.

C. The van of the Britiſh ſomewhat farther to windward.

F. The French fleet, after having wore, and running down before the wind, which, at that time, would give them the appearance of being in diſorder, when ſeen from Sir Hugh Palliſer's ſhip, the Formidable.

G. The French forming in a new line of battle to leeward, upon the ſtarboard tack, with their heads to the ſouthward.

B. fig. 4. Admiral Keppel, now to windward of the French fleet, between four and ſix o'clock in the afternoon, on the ſtarboard tack, with

with the ſhips head to the ſouthward, and in hopes that the enemy would lie-to, and try their fortune in battle with him next morning.

A. The ſuppoſed ſituation of the Formidable.

F. The French fleet in order of battle, to leeward, alſo on the ſtarboard tack, lying-to, to receive the Britiſh Admiral, ſhould he think fit to make an attack.

GGG. Three ſwift ſailing frigates left with lights in their poops to amuſe the Britiſh Admiral, while the reſt of the fleet ſhould ſlip into port before morning.

Mr Keppel, diſcovering the French fleet to windward, ſtruggled hard for four or five days to get up with them; at laſt, the French, willing to give up the conteſt, paſſed to leeward, and formed their line of battle in their favourite poſition, as in the fore mentioned caſe of Mr Arbuthnot off the Cheſepeak; but, in accompliſhing this movement, it muſt be evident, from former examples, that they could have no intention or inclination to come within cannon ſhot of the Britiſh fleet, when paſſing on contrary tacks, as they were forced to do, by the effect of a dark ſquall of wind and rain, and which alſo prevented them from ſeeing where they were till cloſe upon the Britiſh fleet.

Mr Keppel, in his letter to the Admiralty, having given his reaſons why he did not attack the French fleet in the afternoon, it will be improper here to make any farther remark.

The ENGAGEMENT *of the Britiſh fleet under the command of Mr Mathews, with the combined fleets of France and Spain, in the Mediterranean, off Toulon, 11th February 1744, taken from Mr Leſtock's deſcription, preſented by him to the Houſe of Commons* *.

B. fig. 1. Admiral Mathews in the Namure, commanding the center of the Britiſh fleet, at ten o'clock, when the ſignal for battle was given, and three hours before the engagement began.

A. The rear under Mr Leſtock, at that time ſeveral miles a-ſtern.

C. The van, under Mr Rowley, ſome miles a-head, and to windward, ſaid by Mr Leſtock to be in diſorder.

F. The van and center of the enemy cloſed, and compoſed of ſome Spaniſh, but the greateſt part of French ſhips, then going at the rate of three or four miles an hour.

G. The Spaniſh admiral, Juan Joſeppo Navarro, in the Royal Philip, with three ſhips of the rear diviſion, a great way ſeparated from the center.

H. Five other Spaniſh ſhips alſo belonging to the rear diviſion, but far a-ſtern of the admiral.

A. fig. 2. The rear diviſion of the Britiſh, under Mr Leſtock, at one o'clock, ſtill very far a-ſtern.

B. Mr Mathews, in the Namure, at one o'clock, three hours after the ſignal for battle, having broke the line, bore down, accompanied only by the Norfolk and Marlborough, his two ſeconds a-head and a-ſtern, and began the engagement with the Royal Philip and his ſeconds.

C. The van, under Mr Rowley, not yet engaged, but watching carefully to prevent the van of the enemy from getting the wind.

F. The center and van of the enemy ſtill far a-head of the rear.

G. The Royal Phillip engaged with the Britiſh Admiral.

H. The five Spaniſh ſhips ſtill far ſeparated from the Admiral.

I. The Poder, a Spaniſh ſhip, cannonaded, but at a great diſtance, by five ſhips in the Britiſh line.

K.

* Britiſh, 31 ſhips of the line, 2 of fifty guns, and 9 frigates. French and Spaniards, 28 ſhips, and 4 frigates.

K. The Conſtans, the Spaniſh Admiral's ſecond a-head, beat out of the line by the Norfolk, the Admiral's other ſecond a-ſtern firing at her to make her return.

A. fig. 3. Mr Leſtock ſtill a-ſtern.

B. Mr Mathews, aſſiſted by his ſeconds, ſilences the fire from the Royal Phillip, and ſends the fire-ſhip down the wind to ſet him on fire; which fire-ſhip, as ſhe blew up, ſomewhere in the intermediate ſpace between the two ſquadrons, did no hurt to either. The Lieutenant, Gunner, and four men, periſhed in the flames; the remainder of the crew eſcaped in their boats.

C. The van of the Britiſh cannonading the French, but at a great diſtance.

D. Four ſhips, which did not go down to ſupport the Admiral and his ſeconds.

E. The Berwick, commanded by the gallant Mr Hawk, though in the van diviſion, broke the line, bore down *within half muſket ſhot*, (while other ſhips kept to windward), gave battle to the Poder, and, at the firſt broadſide, killed twenty-ſeven of her men, and diſmounted ſeven of her lower deck guns.

F. The French, ſtill on the larboard tack, and far a-head.

G. The Royal Phillip preſerved from the flames, but a perfect wreck. Such a conſternation took place on board, upon the approach of the fire-ſhip, that many of her crew leaped over-board, and were drowned.

H. The ſternmoſt ſhips of the enemy firing at the fire-ſhip as ſhe was coming down, but did not ſeem to reach her.

A. fig. 4. Mr Leſtock ſtill a-ſtern; but it is ſaid had very little wind.

B. Mr Mathews, in the Namure, got to windward, Mr Leſtock having ſaid, that ſoon after the engagement began, (he Mathews) quitted his ſtation, and left the Marlborough M. in the heat of action.

C. The van of the Britiſh, now upon a contrary tack, and returning to join the center.

E. The Berwick quitting the Poder.

F. The center and van of the enemy, now upon the ſtarboard tack, and doubling back to ſupport their rear, conceived to be in great danger.

G. The Royal Phillip; H. the fire-ſhips in his rear.

I. The Poder, which was retaken by the French, with a Lieutenant of the Berwick, and twenty-three men on board.

N. B. At this period, (ſays Mr Leſtock,) Admiral Mathews thought proper to haul down both ſignals, that for engaging, and alſo that for line of battle.

A. fig. 5. Mr Leſtock, with his diviſion, (as he has ſaid himſelf) falling into the line of battle a-head, according the ſignal then abroad.

B. Mr Mathews, at half an hour after five, again made the ſignal of line a battle a-head, and put about; but, there being little wind, ſome ſhips tacked, and others wore, as did the Admiral himſelf, and formed the line a battle a-head, on the other tack, viz. the ſtarboard, leaving the Poder, as Mr Leſtock ſays, to be retaken by the French ſquadron, with the Berwick's Lieutenant and twenty-three of her men. So precipitate was his flight from the French (ſays he) that there was not time to ſave his men.

N. B. Admitting all this ſpeed and hurry, it might have been ſaid, that Mr Mathews rejoined his rear; not that his rear had advanced much to ſupport and rejoin him, as Mr Leſtock would have it believed, when pointing out his own ſituation.

C. Mr Rowley, with the van ſtanding after the center of the fleet.

D. *The four ſhips*, the Dorſetſhire, Eſſex, Rupert, and Royal Oak, firing at the five ſhips in the Spaniſh rear, now within gun-ſhot, having fallen to leeward in wearing, when the Admiral did.

E. The French ſquadron paſſing the Britiſh van, within piſtol-ſhot, (as ſaid), but without firing a ſhot, being intent only on diſengaging the Spaniſh ſquadron, which ought to have been taken or deſtroyed long before this time, even without Mr Leſtock's aſſiſtance, had every one done their duty.

G. The Spaniſh Admiral.

H. The five Spaniſh ſhips, firing at the four ſhips now on contrary tacks, and thought to be within reach.

I. The Poder retaken by the French.

K. The Marlborough in tow, with frigates attending on her, on her way to Mahon.

Night coming on, the combined fleets being to leeward, carried off their diſabled ſhips, by having them in tow, and taking with them the Lieutenant of the Berwick, with twenty-three of her men, who had been

been put on board the Poder, and quitted her, where ſhe was afterwards burnt by the Eſſex.

Without entering into the merits of the diſpute between Meſſrs Mathews and Leſtock, what might have been the moſt proper time for giving the ſignal for bearing down to cloſe engagement, we have no doubt that the following obſervations will now be found juſt.

That, if Mr Mathews and his ſeconds had been properly ſupported, the greateſt part of the Spaniſh rear might have been cut off: Therefore, that the attack made by him, upon the rear of the enemy, as it was ſo far ſeparated from the center and van, was both bold and well deſigned at the time.

That, as Mr Rowley's poſition with the van did overawe the van of the enemy, it was a proper one.

That it is evident that the French, on this occaſion, as well as on all the others that have followed ſince that time, had the ſafety and preſervation of their ſhips only as the principal thing in view.

Again, from this battle we may be able to form ſome judgment of the effect of cannon-ſhot, with reſpect to diſtance.

The Royal Phillip, the Spaniſh Admiral *, in his combat with the Britiſh Admiral and his ſeconds, had all his rigging deſtroyed, not a top-maſt left ſtanding on end, his main-yard upon the deck, two or three port-holes beat into one. He had 238 men killed, and 262 wounded.

The Conſtant, the Spaniſh Admiral's ſecond a-head, during the ſhort time ſhe ſtaid, had 25 men killed, and 43 wounded.

On the other hand, the Marlborough, oppoſed to the Spaniſh Admiral and his ſeconds, had her main and mizen-maſts beat over-board, and, though otherwiſe a wreck, had her enſign nailed to the ſtump of the mizen-maſt which remained; ſhe had 43 men killed, and 128 wounded, amongſt the firſt was Captain Cornwall her brave commander, and Captain Godfrey of the marines.

Great

	Guns.	Men.
* Royal Phillip	114	1350
Iſabella	80	900
Conſtant	70	750
	264	3000

BRITISH FORCE.

	Guns.	Men.
Norfolk	80	600
Namure	90	780
Marlborough	90	750
	260	2130

Great and dreadful as theſe effects were, yet the diſtance between the combatants muſt have been very conſiderable, that could have admitted of a fire-ſhip being put in motion, ſet on fire, time for her men to take to their boats, to quit her, and to get off, and, laſtly, to blow up without injury to ſo many ſhips ſurrounding her. After ſo many circumſtances being allowed to take place, can the diſtance be thought to be leſs than 400 or 500 yards at leaſt?

Again, the Poder of 64 guns, another Spaniſh ſhip, after having been expoſed a long time to a cannonade from five ſhips in the Britiſh line, without having ſuffered material damage; yet the firſt broadſide from the Berwick, (which had broke the foreſaid line, and had approached within half muſket-ſhot), killed twenty-ſeven of her men, diſmounted ſeven of her lower deck guns; and, when ſhe ſtruck to the Berwick, had not a maſt ſtanding.

A General, at the head of his troops, and leading them on to action, has long been conſidered as a ſufficient ſignal; and Mr Mathews's ſhip, when going down to battle, as Admiral, in the center, ſhould have been the example for his whole fleet, whether the ſignal was given at ten or twelve o'clock. The brave commanders of the Norfolk and Marlborough, his ſeconds, were of this mind; as has alſo been Sir George Rodney upon a later occaſion: Therefore, every ſhip which kept her wind, and did not follow the Admiral, Mr Mathews, down to fight the enemy, ought only to be conſidered as breakers of the line. *And hence that ſentence of the Court Martial, which broke Mr Mathews, ought virtually to be conſidered as the ſource of all the many naval miſcarriages ſince.*

ADMIRAL

ADMIRAL PARKER's *Account of the BATTLE with the Dutch on the Doggar Bank, 5th Auguſt* 1781 *.

" Yeſterday morning we fell in with the Dutch ſquadron, with a large convoy, on the Doggar Bank. I was happy to find I had the wind of them, as the great numbers of their large frigates might otherwiſe have endangered my convoy. Having ſeparated the men of war from the merchant ſhips, and made a ſignal to the laſt to keep their wind, I bore away, with a general ſignal to chace. The enemy formed their line, conſiſting of eight two decked ſhips, on the ſtarboard tack. Ours, including the Dolphin of forty-four guns, conſiſted of ſeven. Not a gun was fired on either ſide until within the diſtance of half muſket-ſhot. The Fortitude being then a breaſt of the Dutch Admiral, the action began, and continued with an unceaſing fire for three hours and forty minutes; by this time our ſhips were unmanageable. I made an effort to form the line, in order to renew the action; but found it impracticable. The Bienfaiſant had loſt her main-top maſt, and the Buffalo her fore-yard; the reſt of the ſhips were not leſs ſhattered in their maſts, rigging, and ſails; the enemy appeared to be in as bad a condition. Both ſquadrons *lay-to* a conſiderable time near each other, when the Dutch, with their convoy, bore away for the Texel. We were not in a condition to follow them."

This affair, though in itſelf greatly different from the many we have had with another enemy, yet, with reſpect to the ſubject before us, viz. the mode of attack, is perfectly ſimilar. The gallantry of the Dutch refuſing to fire a gun until the Britiſh Admiral ſhould have made choice of his diſtance, could have no prior influence upon the determination of the Britiſh Admiral in his mode of attack; nor will it make any other difference in the manner the French may afterwards receive us, than to redouble their anxiety not to loſe the leaſt poſſible chance of annoying our ſhips, let the diſtance be what it will, whenever we ſhall be diſpoſed to attack them.

Though this battle has a greater reſemblance to the old Dutch than the preſent French manner of fighting, we cannot help recalling to remembrance

* Britiſh 7 ſhips, 4 frigates.

remembrance thoſe glorious and obſtinate conflicts of former times, which did ſo much honour to both nations.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

FROM theſe examples, it appears, that the attack invariably has been made by a long extended line, generally from the windward quarter, by ſteering or directing every individual ſhip of that line upon her oppoſite of the enemy, but more particularly the ſhips in the van.

That the conſequences of this mode of attack has proved fatal in every attempt; that is, our ſhips have been ſo diſabled, and ſo ill ſupported, that the enemy have been permitted not only to make ſail and leave us, but, to complete the diſgrace, have, in paſſing, been permitted to pour in the fire of their whole line upon our van, without a poſſibility of retaliation on our part. The cauſe, then, of theſe miſcarriages, can never be ſaid to have proceeded from a fault in our ſhipping, and far leſs from a want of ſpirit in our ſeamen.

And, though we have not yet been ſo happy as to ſee their innate courage exerted with advantage in the greater fights, we may yet have the conſolation of being aſſured, even from theſe examples, that it does exiſt, if we take into conſideration the habitual deſire they conſtantly have ſhewn of making the attack, in ſpite of every diſcouraging affront: On the other hand, that the enemy may juſtly be ſaid to have it not in that degree, if we conſider the habitual deſire they have conſtantly ſhown, as well in avoiding, as in refuſing to make the attack.

From the mode of this attack invariably followed throughout moſt of the examples we have given, it would ſeem that an idea had been formed, *by* ſtopping the van, *of taking*, *deſtroying*, *or diſabling the whole of the enemy's line*. The event has proved this attempt impracticable. But will not this idea be alſo found contradictory to the general complaint of the deficiency of our ſhips in point of ſailing? For, if this deficiency is a truth, would it not have been more natural, upon a chace of the enemy, to make ſure of the ſloweſt ſailing veſſels to be found in the rear, than to attempt to get up with the ſwifteſt ſhips to be found in the van?

Another

Another reflection will naturally occur: That, by the great deſtruction of rigging, the conſequence of this mode of attack, the nation has been thrown into a moſt enormous expence of repair, while our enemy, by their cautious conduct, preſerving their ſhips often unhurt, has been enabled not only to protract the war, but, if perſiſted in, will, without doubt, enſure the poſſeſſion, perhaps, of a ſuperior navy complete and entire to the concluſion.

Having now demonſtrated, from evidence which ſhould be ſatisfactory, that the mode or inſtructions hitherto followed for arranging great fleets in line, ſo as to be able to force an enemy to give battle on equal terms, muſt be ſome where wrong, it will be required to ſhow whether any other mode may be deviſed, or put in practice, that will have a better effect.

But, as nothing can be deviſed of worſe conſequence than what has ſo long and repeatedly been put in practice, an offer of any thing new, it is to be hoped, may be examined with that attention which the importance of the ſubject demands.

By the phraſe new, is not here meant, that what follows was never either ſpoke of or thought of before; but it is ſurely ſo far new, as never to have been put in demonſtration by writing, and far leſs put in practice by fighting.

But, if the method or practice of bringing ſingle ſhips into action has been found, by long experience, to ſucceed ſo well, Why ſhould not this practice, in ſome degree, be applied to numerous fleets? We have proved that the intrepidity and perſeverance of our ſeamen, as well as the ſtrength of conſtruction in our ſhips, muſt be ſuperior to the enemy: Ought we not at once to endeavour to bring this ſuperiority to avail us where it beſt can, that is, in getting as cloſe along-ſide of the enemy as poſſible? and that this may be done not only upon equal, but upon far ſuperior terms, will be the ſubject of the following Demonſtration.

MODE

MODE OF ATTACK PROPOSED.

SUPPOSE a fleet of ten, twenty, or more ſhips, extended in line of battle at F, fig. 1. endeavouring to avoid a cloſe engagement, but, at the ſame time, ~~lying to,~~ with the intention of receiving the uſual attack from another fleet of equal number, three or four miles to windward, at B, failing in any form; but let it be in three lines or diviſions: It is required by what method ſhall B make the attack on F with advantage? The improbability, or rather impoſſibility, of attacking and carrying the enemy's whole line of ſhips having already been demonſtrated, the next conſideration will be, How many ſhips may be attacked and carried with advantage? Let it be ſuppoſed that the three ſternmoſt ſhips only, and not exceeding the fourth, are poſſible to be *carried*; let a ſufficient ſtrength A be ſent down to force an attack upon theſe three ſhips, diſpoſed and ſupported according to the judgment of the Admiral, while, in the mean time, he ſhould keep to windward with the reſt of his fleet, formed into ſuch diviſions as would beſt enable him to attend to the motions of the enemy, and the effect of his attack; being himſelf ſo far diſengaged from action, as to be able to make his obſervations, and give his orders, with ſome degree of tranquillity.

By placing the fleet B in the diviſion, as in fig. 2. means only that the attacking fleet ſhall be ſo diſpoſed, and ſo connected together, as to be able to give the ſupport and attention that may be required to any ſhip, or any part of the fleet, and in preference to a long extended line of ſix or ſeven miles in length, where it muſt be impracticable to give the neceſſary ſupport to ſuch ſhips as may be diſabled *.

And,

* The length of a ſhip of 74 guns is about . . . 54 yards
Interval between two ſhips, at one cable's length aſunder . 240
294
The ſixth part of a mile . . . 6
Six ſhips, formed in line of battle a-head, will extend about a mile in length, or 1760 yards 1764

And four large ſhips, when at 1½ cable's length, may form another ſcale ſufficiently correct for a mile.

And, though the number of ſhips contained in each ſquadron may, by many, be thought a proper rule for determining the number of the ſhips to be attacked, yet, as there will be next to a certainty of carrying three, we would chooſe to keep by that number. Wherefore, although it may afterwards be found proper to give other opinions, and to enter into a fuller diſcuſſion of the choice, and the beſt arrangement of the particular ſhips deſtined for the approaching, and making this attack, it is neceſſary here to carry on the following demonſtration upon the ſuppoſition of three ſhips being the number proper to be attempted.

It will be evident, however, that the headmoſt, or ſwifteſt ſailing ſhips of B may get cloſe along-ſide of the ſternmoſt of the enemy F, even though the ſhips of F ſhould, in general, be faſter ſailers than thoſe of B; *an opinion, which, for argument's ſake alone, ſhall be for once admitted.* But it will not, therefore, be admitted, that every individual ſhip of a great fleet, or even of the number 15, as in the figure, will be able to outſail every individual ſhip of a numerous Britiſh fleet, or even of the number 15, as in the plan. Therefore, there will be a neceſſity that the ſwifteſt ſhips of B muſt come up along ſide of the ſternmoſt and dulleſt ſailing ſhips of the enemy F; while, at the ſame time F (by an attempt of outſailing B) muſt be thrown into the diſorder of a downright flight: Therefore, of courſe, it muſt be admitted, that, if the enemy F continues going off in line of battle, and endeavouring to avoid a cloſe engagement, it will be impoſſible to prevent the fleet making the attack from getting into the poſition of figure 2.

By this poſition, then, it is evident, that theſe three ſhips at I, will be in the power of the Admiral of B. For, by keeping ſo many ſhips to windward, he will be enabled to ſend down freſh ſhips from time to time, either for the ſupport, or to ſupply the ſtation of any of thoſe that may be diſabled in making the attack, while it may be imagined, that the three ſhips in queſtion, by being diſabled, or being deprived of the wind, now taken out of their ſails by the ſhips to windward, will be prevented from following their friends.

From hence the enemy a-head muſt either abandon his three ſternmoſt ſhips, or he muſt double back to ſupport them, which muſt be done either by tacking or by wearing. But let it be firſt examined what is naturally to be done by tacking, and for the greater ſatisfaction, let every poſſible caſe that can happen be examined ſeparately.

Fig.

Fig. 3. And firſt let us ſuppoſe, that the enemy at F has continued to protract his courſe in line of battle, upon the ſame tack, and that the headmoſt ſhip H with the three next a-ſtern of her, have tacked to windward, and that the whole remaining ſhips intend to tack the ſame way, but in ſucceſſion, as in fig. 3. is it not evident, that F has then left his three ſternmoſt ſhips at I in the power of the ſhips at A, that he muſt alſo leave expoſed his fourth and fifth ſhip G to another attack from another diviſion of the Britiſh at C, which will alſo be on equal terms as with his three ſternmoſt at I; and, laſtly, if he proſecutes his intention of ſupporting his three ſhips, he will be obliged to begin a diſadvantageous attack upon the Admiral, with the main body of the fleet lying ready to receive him.

Fig. 4. The conſequence of all which will be, that he will not only loſe his three ſternmoſt ſhips, but in all probability the fourth and fifth alſo, as in fig. 4. and will be forced to begin an attack, and cloſe, and mix ſhip with ſhip, on equal terms; a ſituation which he, at all times, with the greateſt anxiety, hath avoided, and we, with equal anxiety, have always courted.

Fig. 5. Again, ſuppoſe that his three ſternmoſt ſhips have been attacked, and that he ſhall order his fleet to tack all at one time, and not in ſucceſſion, as in fig. 5. The conſequences will then be, that this movement having required ſome time, and ſome length of courſe, will have produced a conſiderable diſtance between his main body and his three ſhips; or, in other words, that they have been deſerted; for it will not be in their power to tack with the reſt of their friends.

He muſt alſo, in bringing his ſhips heads round, expoſe the ſhips neareſt his enemy to be raked by a dreadful cannonade.

Fig. 6. He muſt alſo run the riſk of having his fleet thrown into a general diſorder, by many of his ſhips miſſing ſtays, wearing, and running to leeward, as in fig. 6. Laſtly, upon a ſuppoſition that his ſhips have all tacked, and none of them miſſed ſtays, ſtill he muſt of neceſſity begin the attack, mix ſhips, and come to a cloſe engagement, as in the former caſe.

Having ſhewn the conſequences of an attempt to windward, let us alſo examine what may be expected from an attempt to leeward. Suppoſe the two fleets in the ſame poſition as in fig. 2.; that is, the main body of the enemy extended in line of battle to leeward, his three ſternmoſt

ſternmoſt ſhips entangled with the fleet B, whoſe Admiral, with the main body, keeps to windward, to obſerve, with a rigid attention, the motions of the enemy.

Fig. 7. At the ſame time, ſuppoſe that the Admiral F has ordered his ſternmoſt ſhip G to wear, and afterwards the whole line, and that he is now running upon a contrary tack to leeward, as at H, wiſhing to ſupport or bring off his three ſhips.

From inſpection, it will be evident, that this attempt may be more dangerous than the attempt to windward; for it will expoſe a number of his ſhips to a raking fire, while, in the act of wearing, the ſquadron, by getting ſo far to leeward, will be unable to give the proper ſupport to the three ſhips.

It will open a gap for the fleet of B (who will immediately wear alſo, and follow him) to break in, as at A, and cut off the three ſhips without hope of recovery.

And, if F ſhall ſtill perſiſt in the endeavour to recover his three ſhips, he will be obliged to begin the attack, under all the uſual diſadvantages.

Fig. 8. Again, upon another ſuppoſition, that the headmoſt ſhip of the enemy H, with the four or five next a-ſtern, have wore, and are running upon a contrary tack, wiſhing, as before, to ſupport or bring off the three ſhips, the reſt of the fleet intending to wear alſo, and follow in ſucceſſion, is it not evident that this movement, being more unſeaman-like, will be worſe than the laſt?

It will expoſe an additional number of ſhips, particularly the laſt two, as at G, and will, at the ſame time, make an opening for the main body of B's fleet, to fall in and cut off the three ſhips, as in the former caſe.

Fig. 9. Again, ſhould the enemy F wear and bear away with his whole ſhips at one and the ſame time, as in fig. 9. it is evident that this movement muſt have the conſequences of a downright flight, with the certainty of loſing the three ſhips.

Laſtly, upon the ſuppoſition that ſuch an attack has been made, and that the three ſhips are entangled, it generally follows, that, though the wind may be blowing a freſh gale at the beginning of the battle; yet it often falls away ſo much from the effect of a violent cannonade, that it may be impoſſible for the headmoſt ſhips of F's fleet, to give the leaſt aſſiſtance to his ſhips diſtreſſed in his rear.

From

From what has been ſaid, it will appear, that a fleet B, keeping connected in a body to windward, *may* come up with, and entangle the three ſternmoſt ſhips of an enemy F, extended in line of battle, and going off to leeward, and, at the ſame time, be able to overawe the remaining main body of their fleet; and that, having forced the poſition, as in plan 2d, the whole conſequences, as already deſcribed, muſt follow; that is, F muſt ſubmit to the loſs of three ſhips.

What has been hitherto ſaid, proceeds upon a ſuppoſition, that the fleet F has kept on his courſe till the fleet B has come up with his rear; let it then be examined what other attempts the enemy F can make to avoid coming to cloſe engagement upon equal terms.

Fig. 10. Suppoſe a fleet of ſhips of the enemy ſtanding on the larboard tack to leeward, and going off as before at F, and a fleet of ſhips in a collected ſtate or poſition to windward, as at B, fig. 10.

Fig. 11. and 12. And ſuppoſe that the enemy F, perceiving the fleet B pointing an attack againſt his rear, as in fig. 11.; and that, in place of keeping on his courſe upon the ſame tack, ſhould wear, and endeavour to paſs on contrary tacks to leeward; for it will not be admitted that he can get to windward (ſee plan 12.), What will then be the effect?

Is it not evident, that the headmoſt ſhips of F muſt be forced to leeward by the fleet B obſtructing his line of direction, or the line of his courſe? They muſt be forced to begin an attack at any diſtance B may chooſe.

Fig. 13. That they may receive ſuch damage as will ſtop their way: That their way being ſtopped, will of courſe be an obſtruction to the next aſtern; or, that theſe ſubſequent ſhips, to prevent this ſtop, muſt bear away to leeward of their crippled ſhips, as at G, which will not only prevent theſe ſhips from damaging the headmoſt ſhips of B, but will give time and opportunity to B to bring down his windward ſhips to fall in, either a-head or a-ſtern, that is, to the right or left, of his headmoſt ſhips A, and oppoſe ſhip for ſhip of the enemy upon equal terms. *Vide* plan 13.

But, ſhould none of theſe headmoſt ſhips of the ſquadron F be crippled; that is, ſhould F paſs B without reach of cannon-ſhot, which undoubtedly he will do; ſtill, while bearing away, he may be forced to ſuffer a diſtant cannonade, ſhip with ſhip, on equal terms.

Fig.

Fig. 14. Whether he wears and gets back upon his former tack, as in plan 14.

Fig. 15. Or continues to run before the wind, as in plan 15.

Fig. 16. But, if F perſiſts to paſs on a contrary tack to leeward, and without reach of cannon-ſhot, is it not evident that B muſt ſome time or other come up with the rear of F, whether B ſhall, at any time, be a-breaſt of his center, as in plan 16.

Or of his rear, as in plan 17.

Or whether F puts right before the wind, as in plan 18.

Or runs off ſhip by ſhip, as he beſt can, as in plan 19.?

From whence it follows, that a collected and connected fleet of ſhips to windward, will, on every occaſion, be able to make an advantageous attack upon a fleet of ſhips ~~lying-to~~, to leeward, and wiſhing to avoid a cloſe engagement. And hence the attacking fleet has ſuch advantages over the receiving fleet, that no manoeuvring whatever can compenſate: Therefore, ſuch receiving fleet, upon an equality of behaviour of the individuals, muſt be worſted.

Although many eminent ſeamen are now fully convinced that an attack made upon the rear of an enemy's fleet will have a much better chance of ſucceſs than an attack upon the whole line, or even on the van, as hitherto practiſed; yet, as there are different opinions how this attack ſhould be conducted, we with to lay before the reader thoſe that have been given us.

Fig. 20. *Firſt*, If it is ſuppoſed that the attack ſhall be made by the greater part of the force of B's fleet, coming right before the wind, upon the ſix ſternmoſt ſhips of an enemy F,

Is it not evident that the ſhips of B, by making the attack in this manner, muſt be expoſed, without a poſſibility of return, to as many broadſides from each of theſe ſix ſhips of F as can be got ready during a courſe of two miles?

Hence, as the ſaid ſhips of B will aſſuredly be diſabled, before they will have it in their power to hurt the enemy, this diſadvantage ſhould determine the impropriety of this mode.

Fig. 21. Suppoſe again, That ſome part of the force choſen to make the attack ſhall be ſent to leeward, as at A, as well as to windward of the three ſhips determined to be attacked, as at C.

But

But the danger ſuppoſed, of ſhot paſſing over the enemy's ſhips, and ſtriking thoſe of our friends, may be an objection to this mode.

Fig. 22. Others have been of opinion, that the headmoſt ſhip A, choſen to make the attack, ſhall come cloſe up along ſide of the ſternmoſt of the enemy, and, having delivered her fire, ſhall puſh along the line as far as poſſible, which may be ſuppoſed to be the ſixth ſhip of the enemy F; and, as it is evident that this firſt ſhip A may have received ſix broadſides, that is, a broadſide from every one of the ſix enemy's ſhips, during her courſe in paſſing them, it has been thought poſſible that the other five ſhips C C C C C, by following cloſe after her, may attain their ſtations, each a-breaſt of her oppoſite, without having received a greater number of broadſides than they have had it in their power to return; and, therefore, that by this mode will be determined the number of ſhips to be attacked. For as many ſhips as the leading ſhip will be able to reach, as many ſhips will the attacking fleet be able to carry.

Fig. 23. A fourth, and probably the beſt mode of attack, may be compoſed from a medium taken from the laſt. Let it be ſuppoſed, as in the former caſes, that the fleet B has been brought up to action in a collected manner, but ſubdivided only ſo far as the ſervice may require, (as formerly ſtated in fig. 2.), and that the leeward diviſion A ſhall be more particularly deſtined for the immediate attack, while, at the ſame time, the body of the fleet, keeping to windward, ſhall be ſuppoſed attentive to give the neceſſary ſupport where required:

Then let it be ſuppoſed, that the headmoſt ſhip C, making the attack, having been ſoon crippled, ſhall not have been able to puſh farther than the third or fourth ſhip of the enemy's line:

Will it not be eaſy to conceive, that ſome one, or more, of the ſhips to windward, attentive to ſupport and ſupply her place, may bear down on the fourth ſhip of the enemy, under cover of the ſmoke, throw in her fire, and puſh on to the fifth or ſixth ſhip, as at D, or, perhaps, farther; and that ſo far as this freſh ſhip D, or a ſecond freſh ſhip E, may be able to puſh, ſo many ſhips of the enemy may be expected to be carried?

For, whatever ſhips of the enemy can be got a-breaſt of, at a proper diſtance, *may be diſabled, and therefore commanded*, by the numerous freſh ſhips kept to windward for this purpoſe.

In all the different attacks upon the rear, it has, by ſome, been thought a great object, if practicable, to throw a raking fire into the

rear of an enemy's line of battle, by ſhips detached for that purpoſe, as at O. For if ſhot, as has been ſaid, can take effect at a diſtance of two miles, from this poſition it will ſurely reach the ſixth ſhip, if the enemy's line ſhall be formed at two cables length aſunder; and, if formed at one cable's length aſunder, it will reach, and may cripple the twelfth ſhip.

To conclude, we think it is ſhown, in the preceding Narrative and Demonſtrations,

1. That Britiſh ſeamen, from the nature, as well as the greater extent of the navigation upon our coaſts, muſt, of neceſſity, be ſuperior both in ſkill and intrepidity, as well as in number, to thoſe of other nations.

2. That deficiency in point of ſailing, upon many occaſions, evidently has not been the cauſe of theſe late miſcarriages; but, if it has *really* been the cauſe on others, Is it not high time to ſet about ſuch reformation in our dock-yards as may recover an equality in a point ſo important? Even ſuppoſing this to be the truth, why ſhould we uniformly attempt getting up with the enemy's van, with a view to carry their whole fleet, inſtead of contenting ourſelves with a certainty of cutting off a few of their dulleſt ſailing veſſels in the rear?

3. That the enemy, by habitually avoiding both making and receiving the attack, acknowledge the ſuperiority of our men and ſhips; and that, on the other hand, Britiſh ſeamen, by as habitually making the attack, in defiance of every diſcouragement, virtually aſſert this ſuperiority?

4. That the mode of running down the wind in a line, each ſhip directing her courſe upon her oppoſite, and pointing the attack upon the van, with a view of ſtopping it, in preference to an attack upon the rear, has proceeded from an idea of carrying every ſhip in the enemy's fleet; but this mode has evidently given the enemy an opportunity of diſabling our ſhips, and preventing us from coming cloſe along ſide of them.

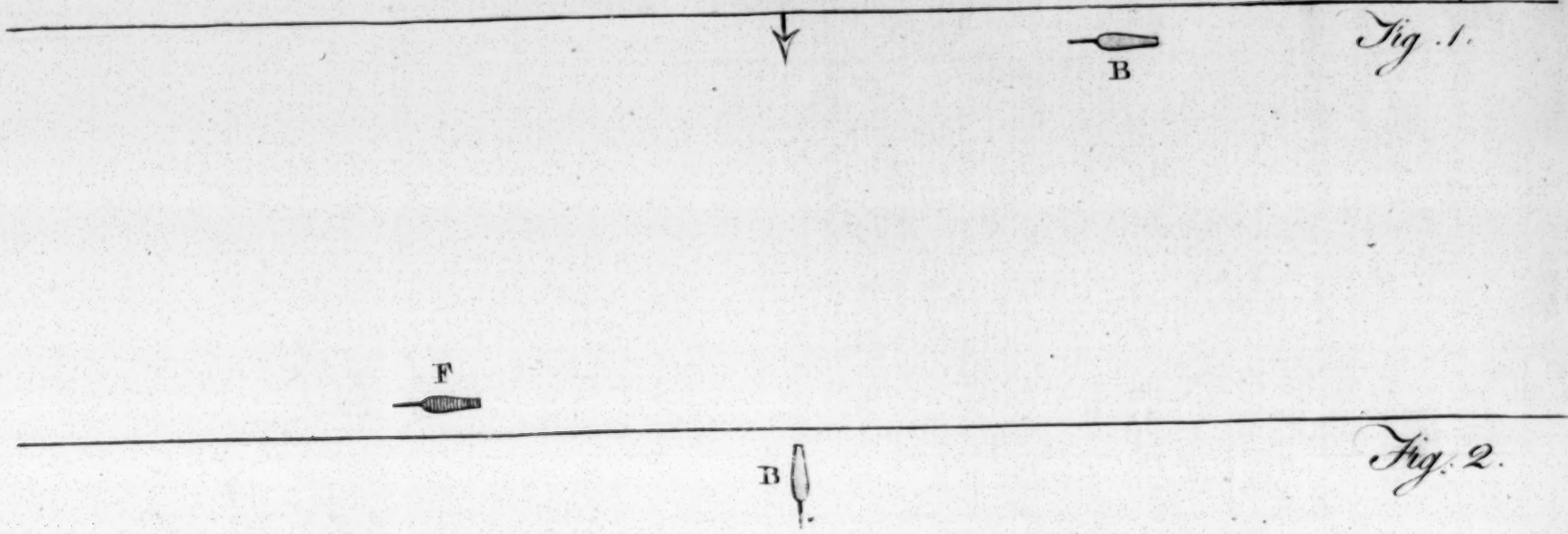
Many other views of this ſubject might be given, both with reſpect to the attack and defence; but as this paper is already, perhaps, too long, it is proper to ſtop till we learn what may be ſaid in oppoſition to the ſyſtem we have endeavoured to ſupport.

F I N I S.

John Clerk

By an overhaste in Copying the ori
ginal drawings some Ships are thrown
into improper positions and altho
this can do no material hurt to the
demonstrations in general. will
afterwards be Corrected as Un pleasing
to the eye of a Seaman

Plate I.



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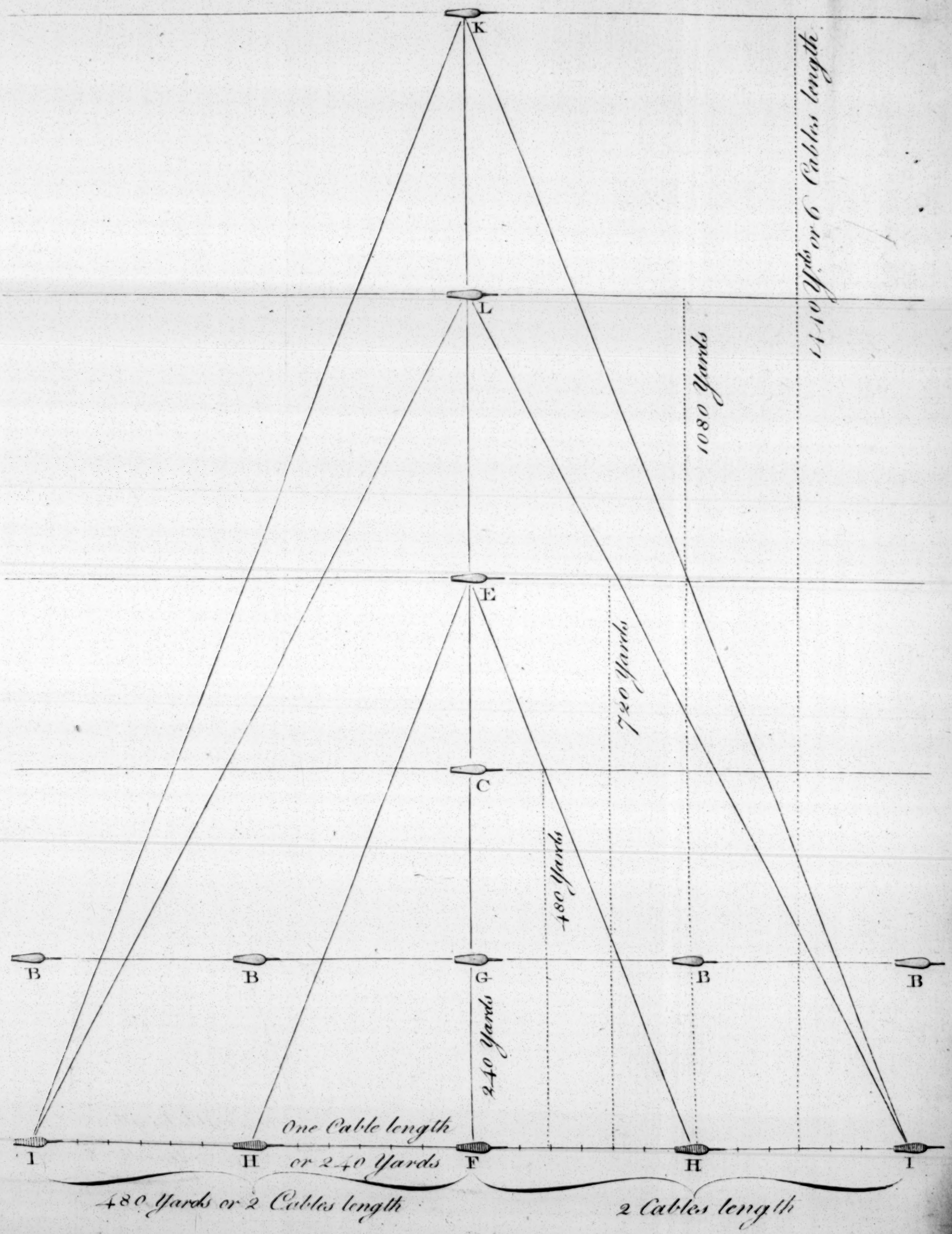
K
L
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I
1440 Yards or 6 Cables length
1080 Yards
720 Yards
480 Yards
240 Yards
One Cable length
or 240 Yards
480 Yards or 2 Cables length
2 Cables length

Plate III.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

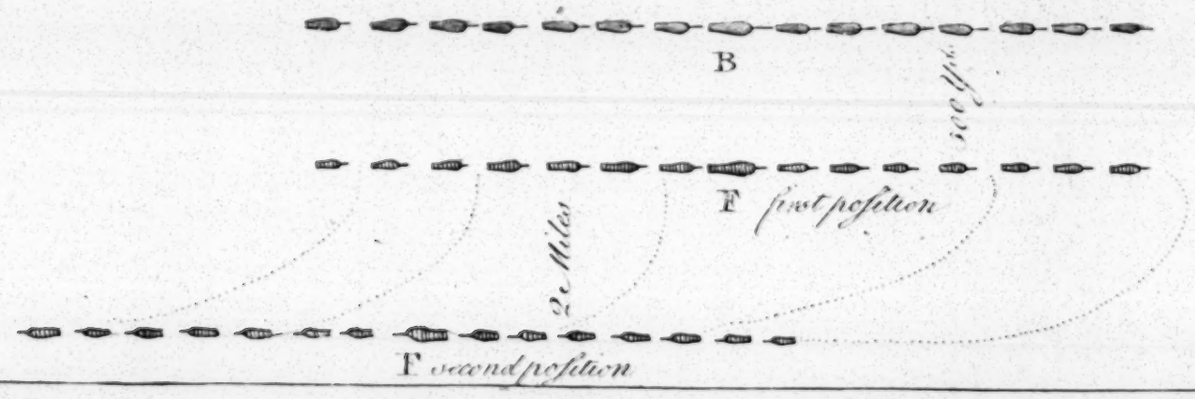


Fig. 4.

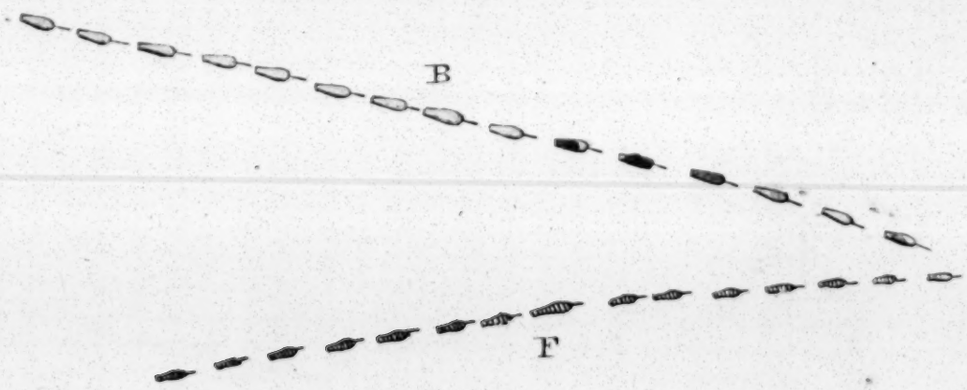
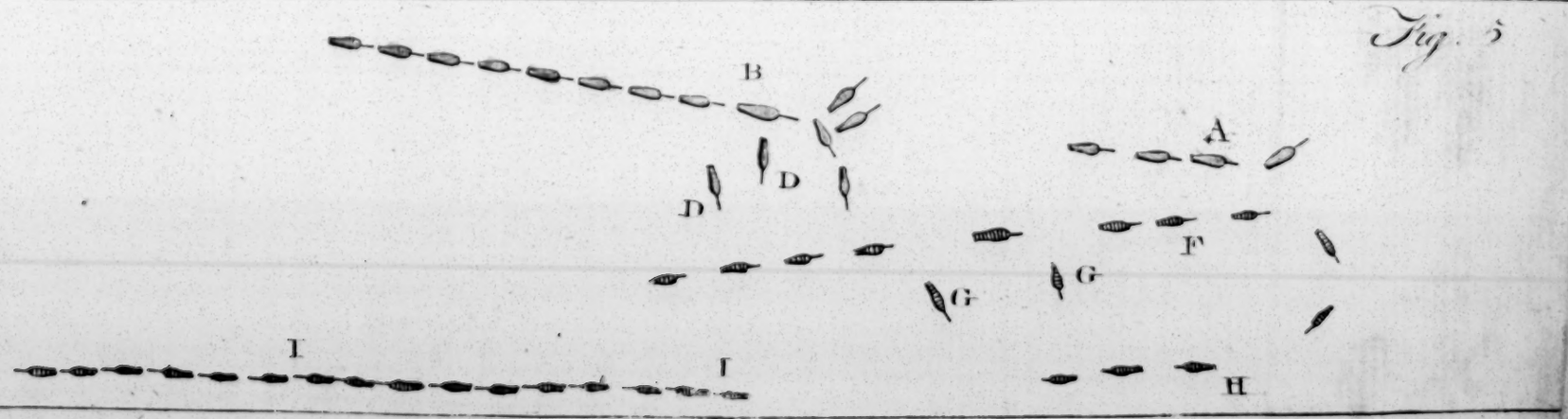


Fig. 5.



Admiral Byron off Granada
6 July 1779.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Plate V.

Admiral Arbuthnots Battles of the Chesapeake 16 March 1781.

Fig. 1.

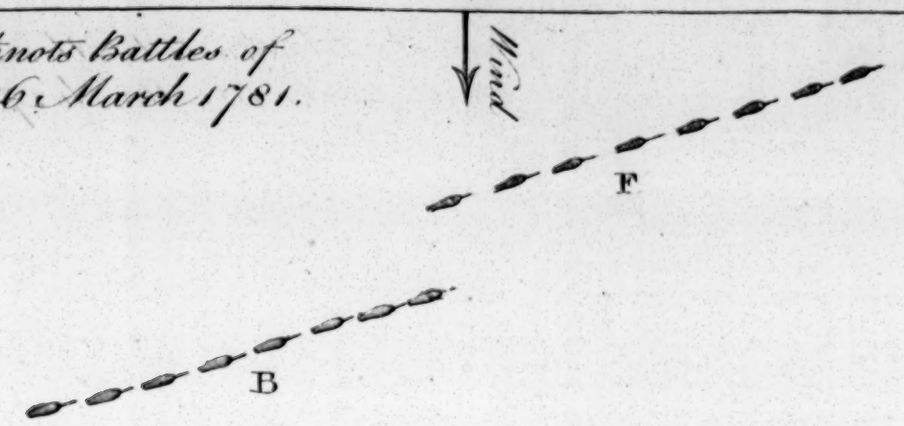


Fig. 2.

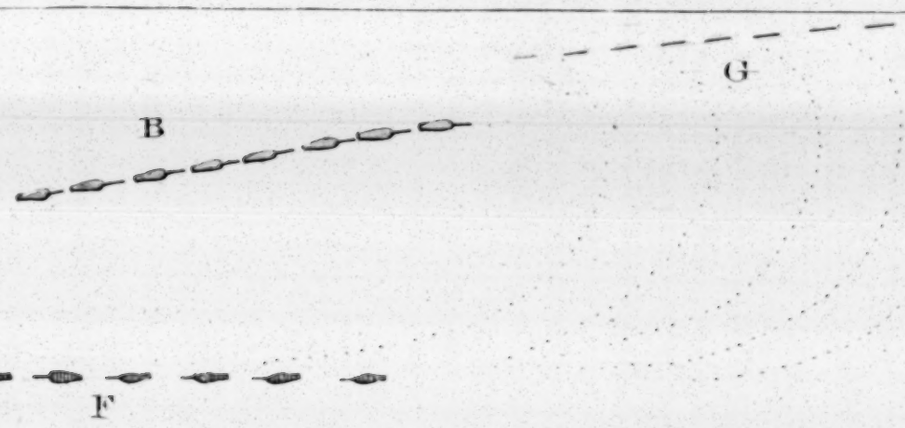


Fig. 3.

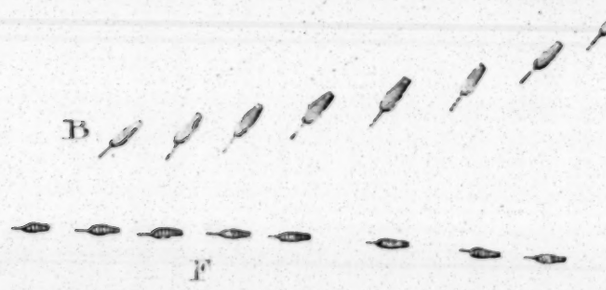


Fig. 4.

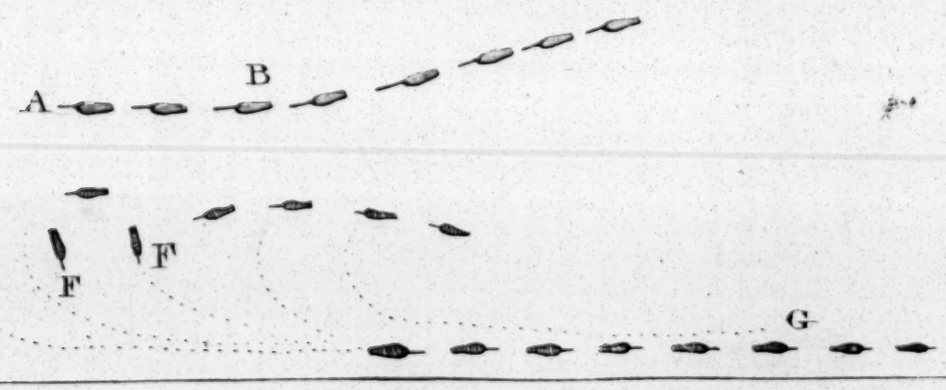


Fig. 5.

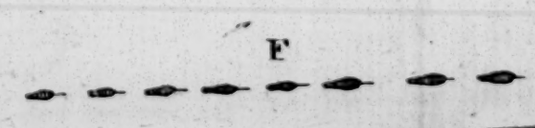


Plate VI.

Admiral Graves's Battle off the Chesapeake 5 Sept.r 1781.

Wind

Fig. 1.

Cape Charles

Chesapeake

Midle Ground

B

F

G

Cape Henry

Fig. 2.

Cape Charles

A

A

A

B

F

Fig. 3.

B

F

Fig. 4.

B

F

G

Plate VII.

Fig. 1.

Admiral Byngs Battle
Mediterancan 20th May 1756

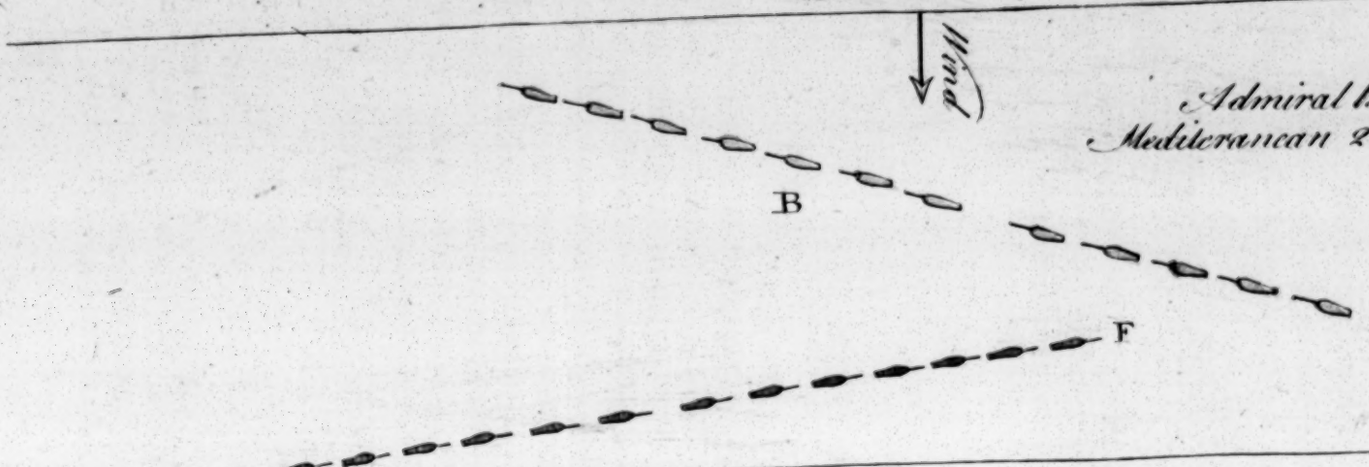


Fig. 2.

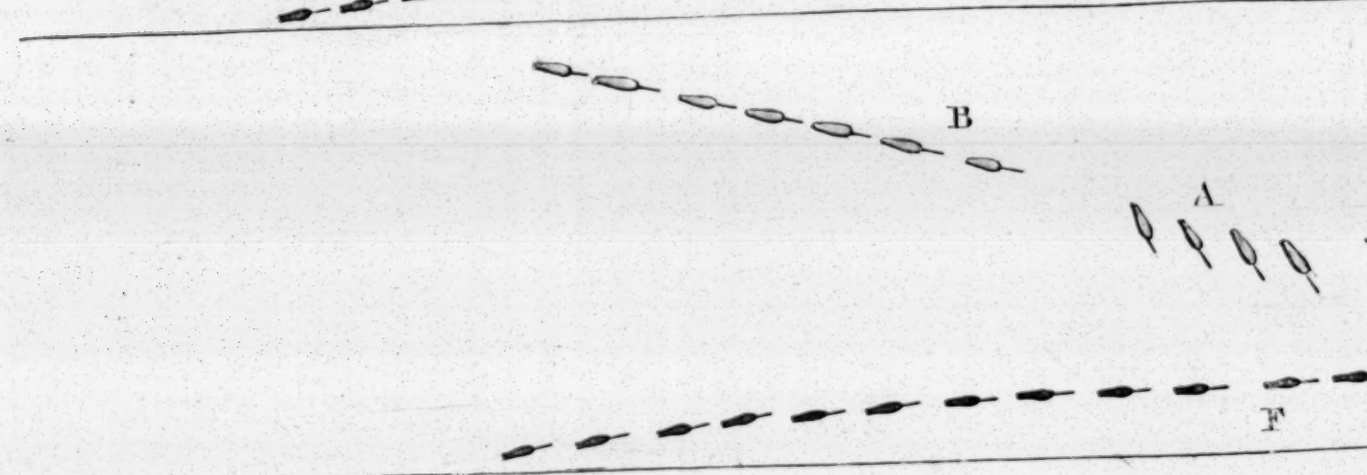


Fig. 3.

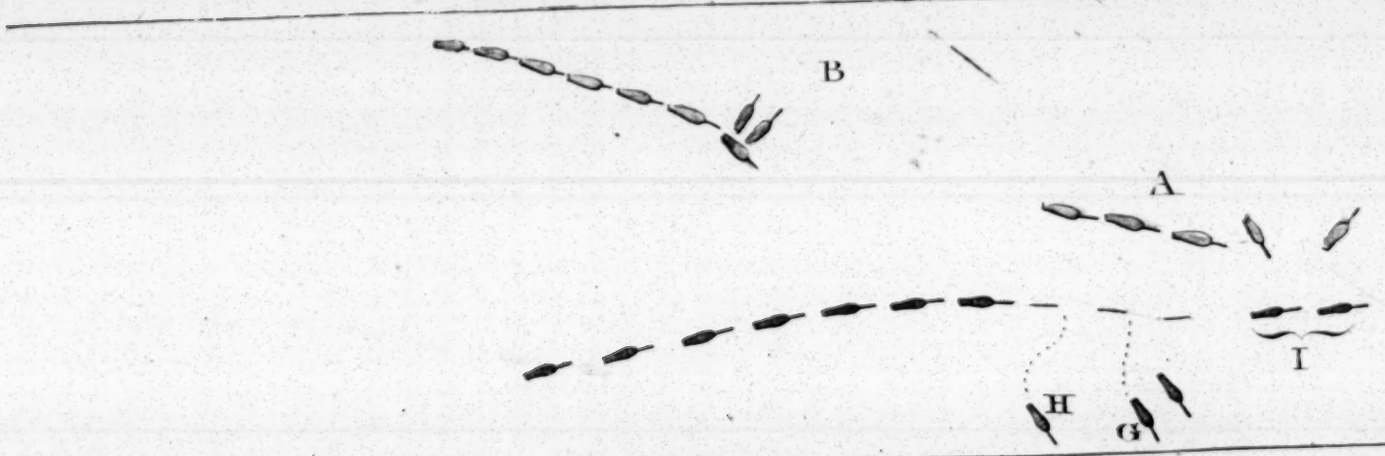
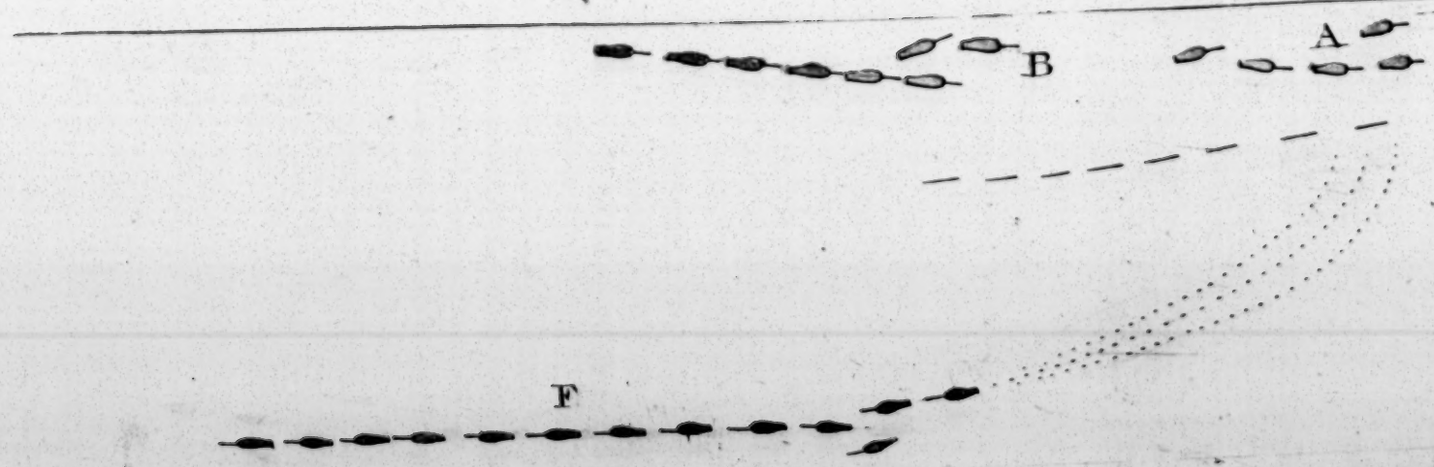


Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.



Sir Geo. Brydges Rodney off the West end of Martinico 17 April 1780.

Fig. 1.

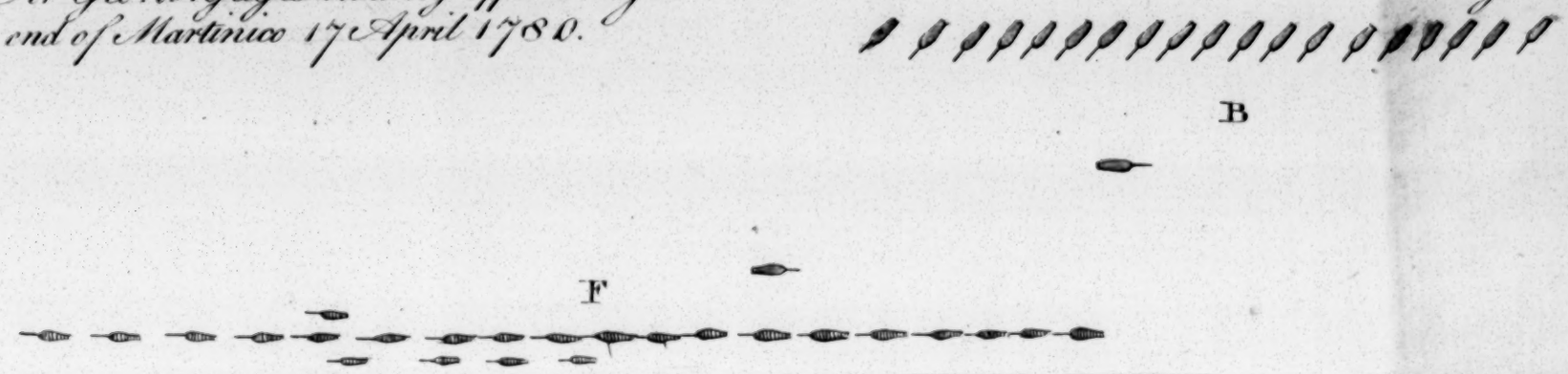


Fig. 2.

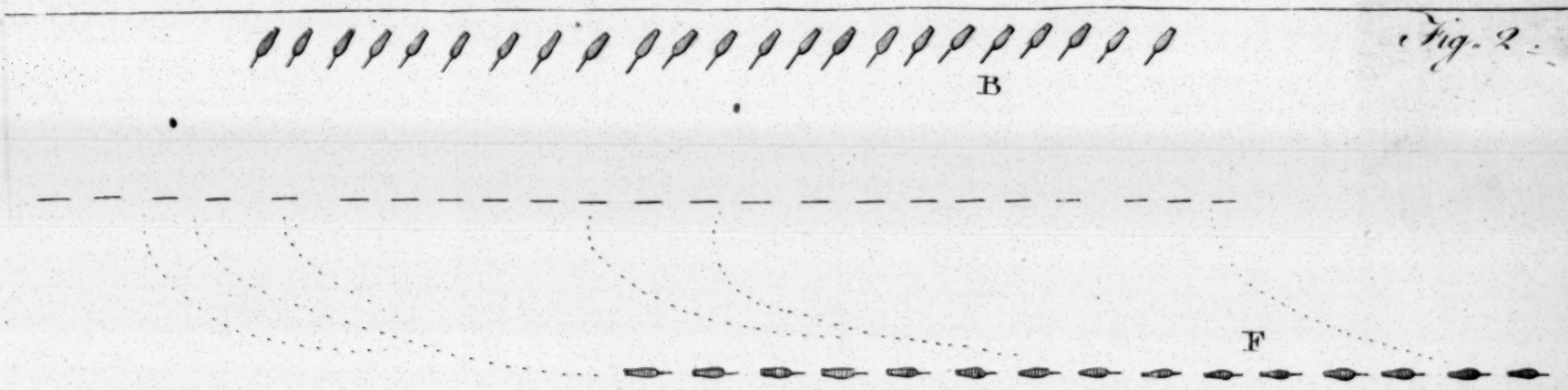


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4

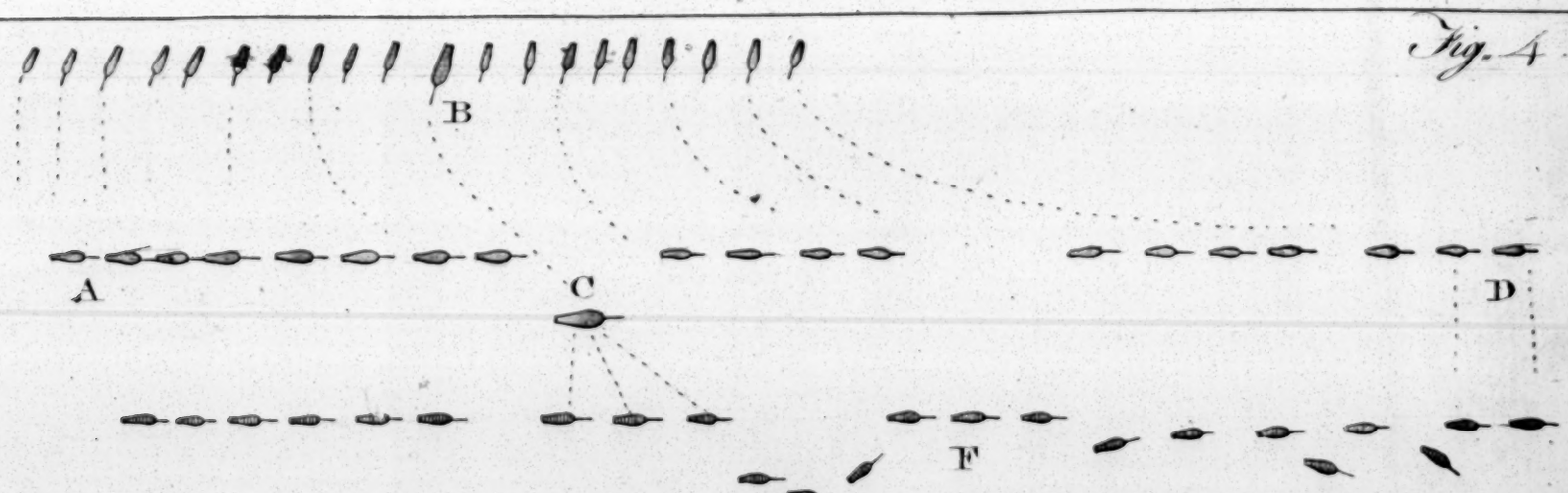
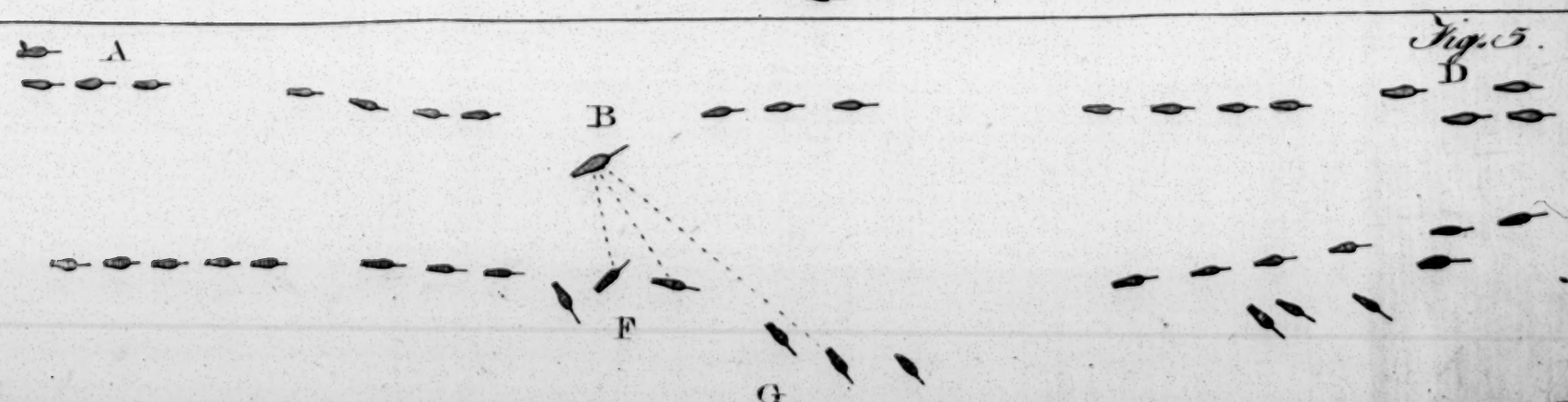


Fig. 5.



Sir Geo: Brydges Rodney's Rencounter to Windward of Martinico 15 May 1780.

Fig. 1.

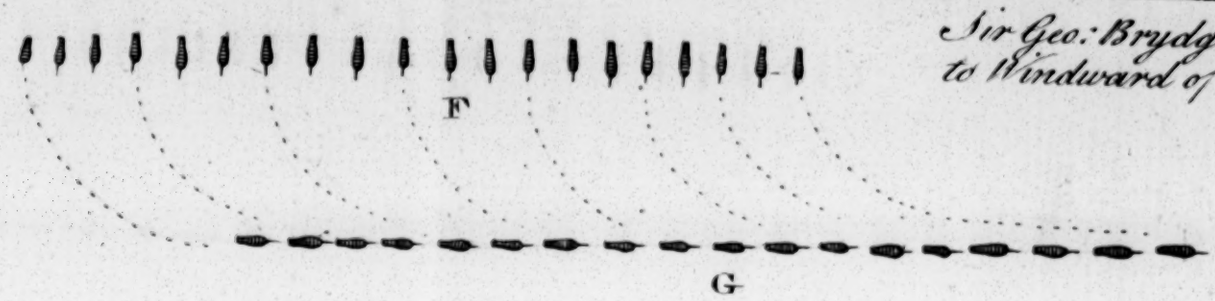


Fig. 2.

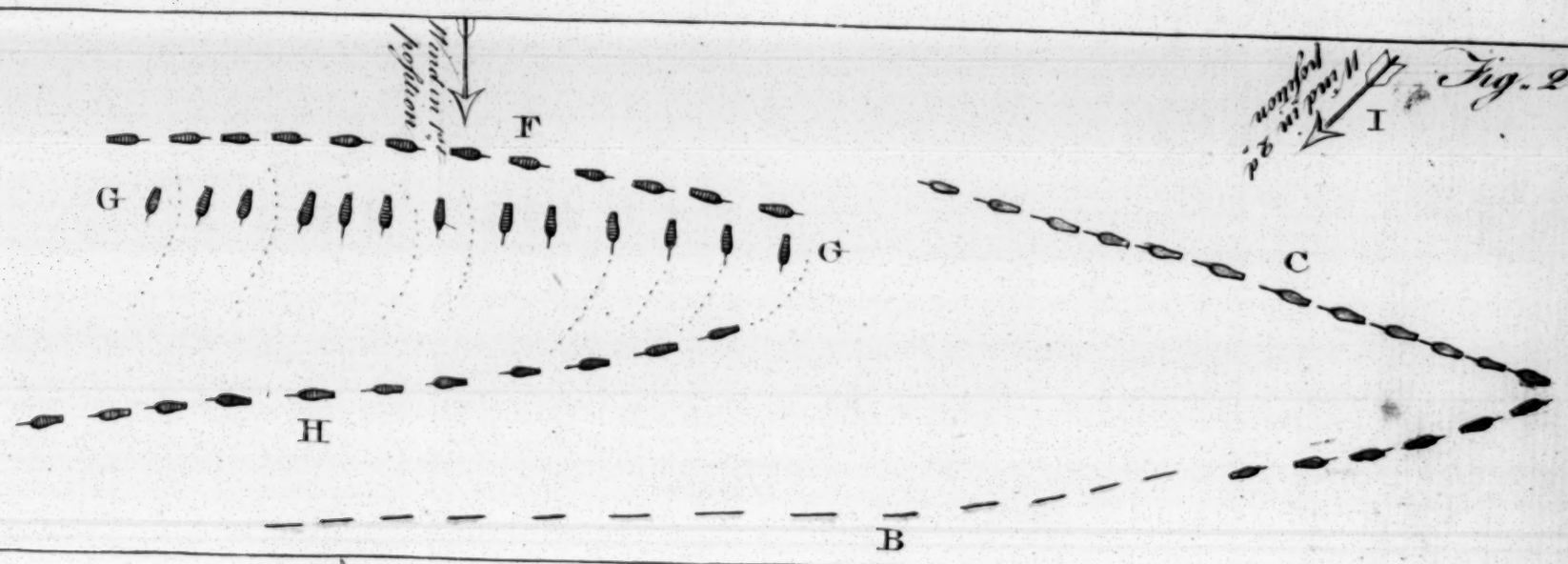


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

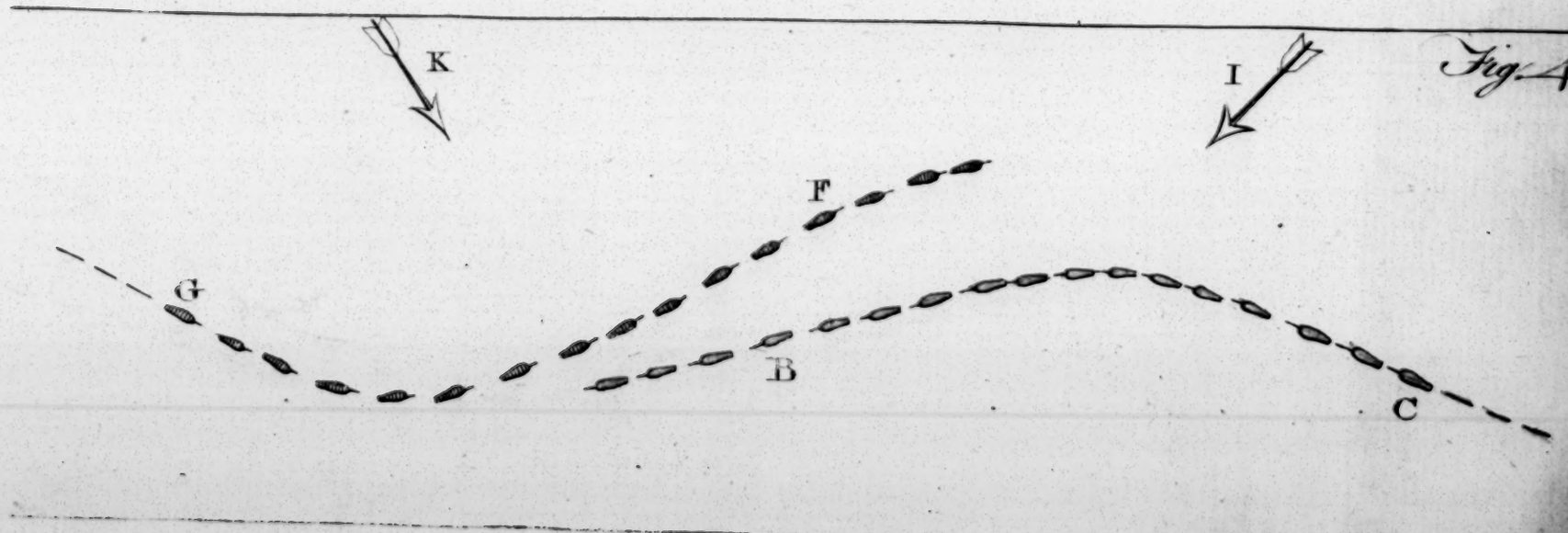


Plate X.

Sir Geo: Brydges Rodneys Rencounter of the 19 May 1780.

Fig. 1.

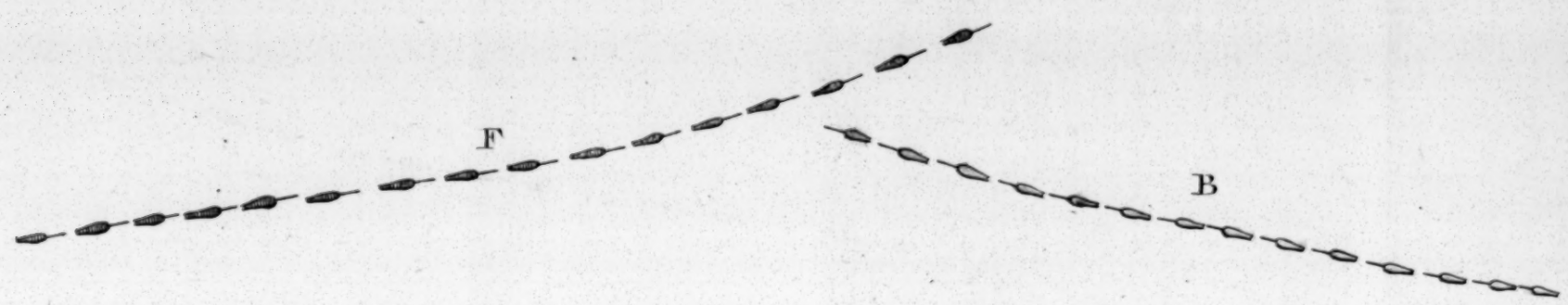
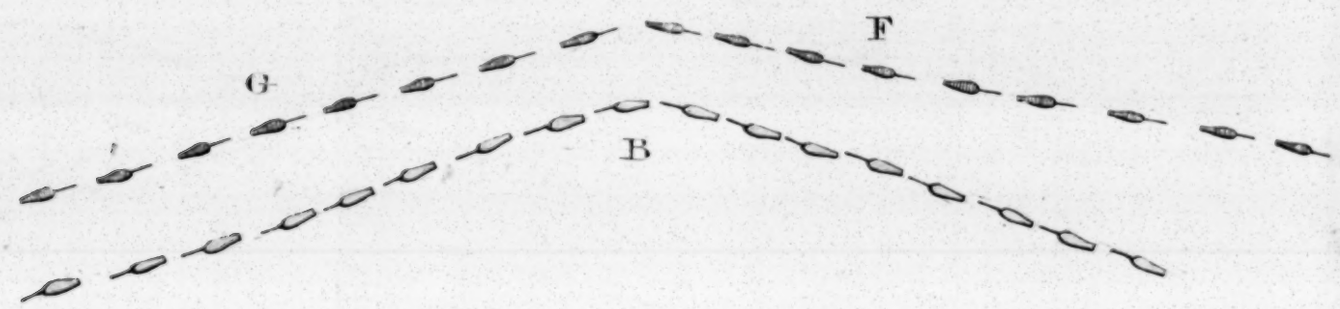


Fig. 2.



Admiral Keppels Battle off Ushant
27 July 1778.

Fig. 1.

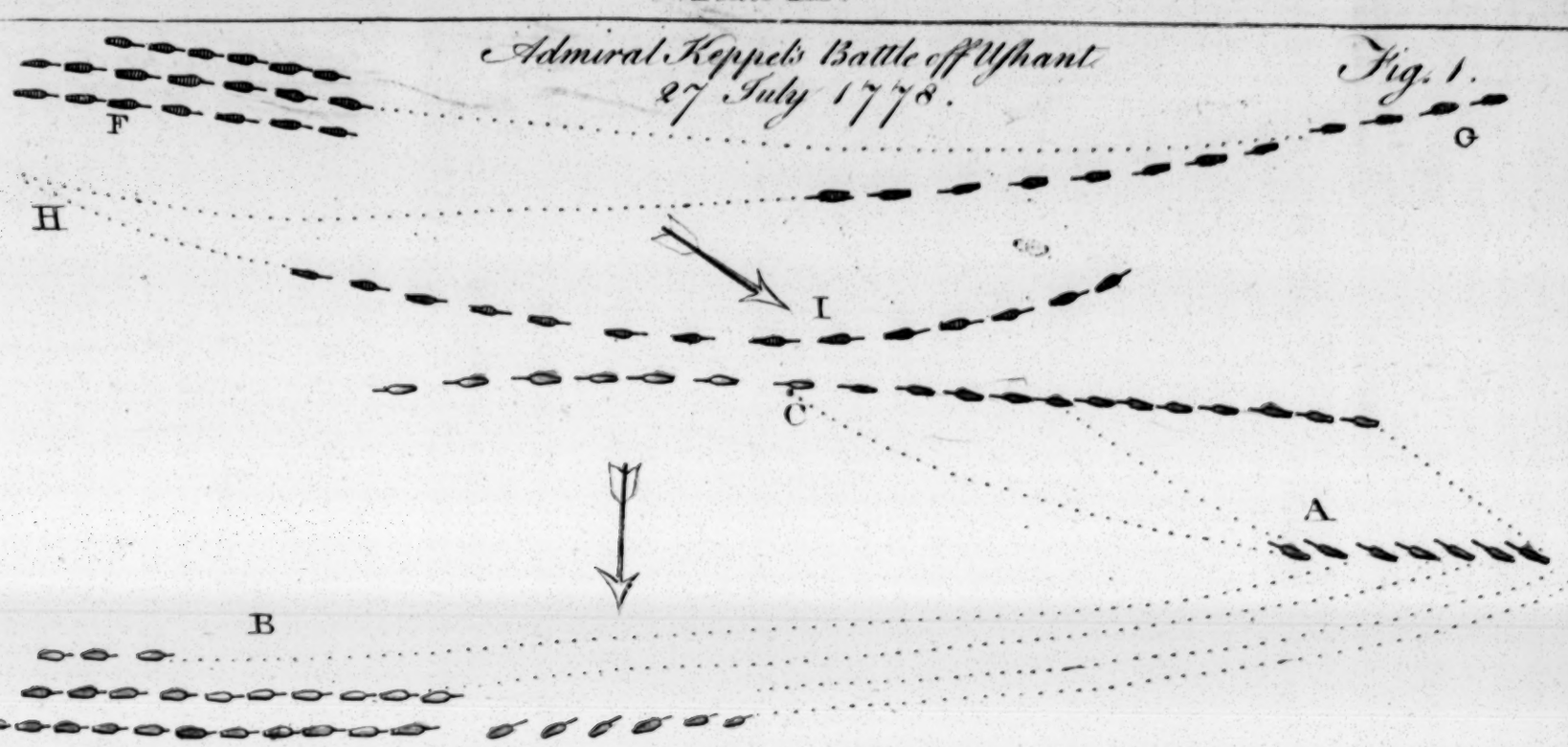


Fig. 2.

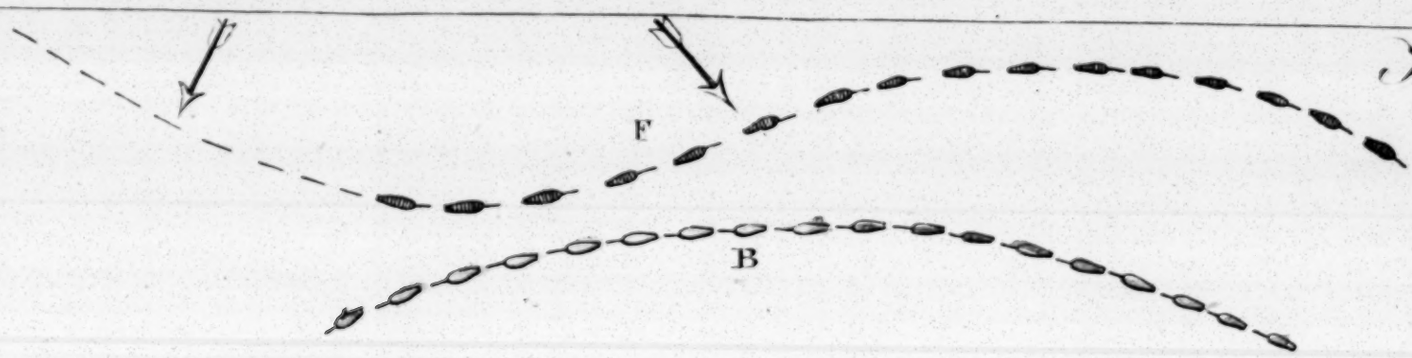


Fig. 3.

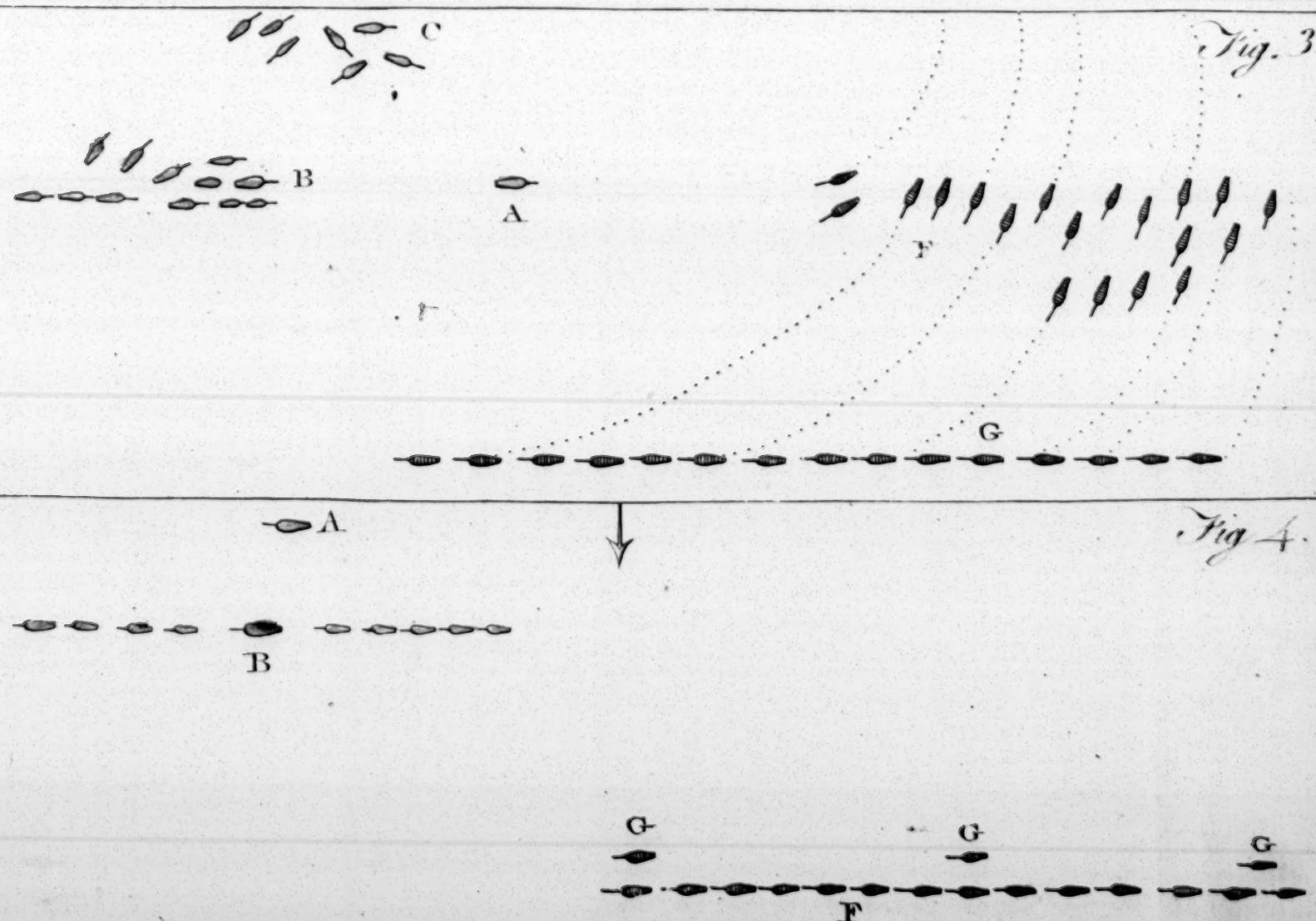


Fig 4.

Engagement of Admiral Matthews with the combined Fleets of France & Spain 11 Feb.y 1744.

Fig. 1.

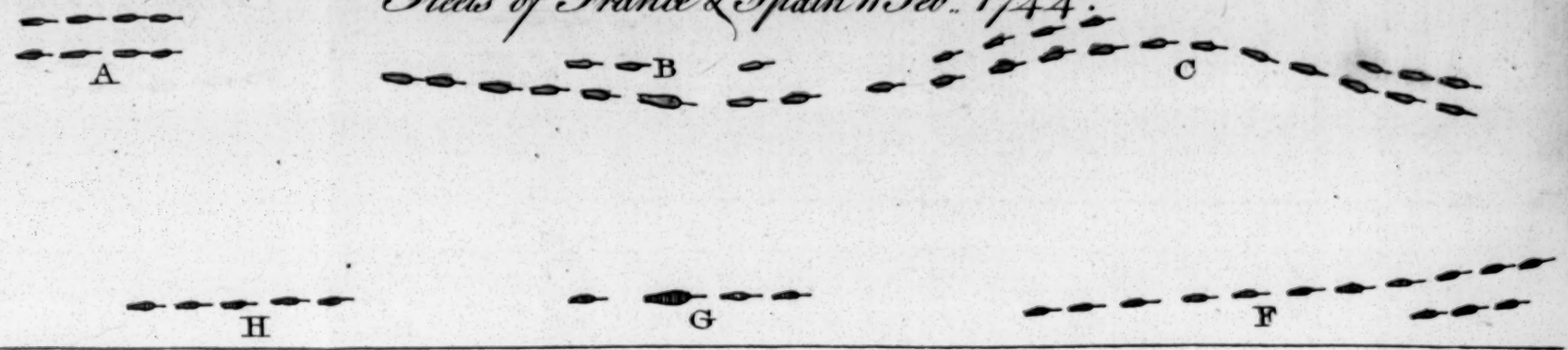


Fig. 2.

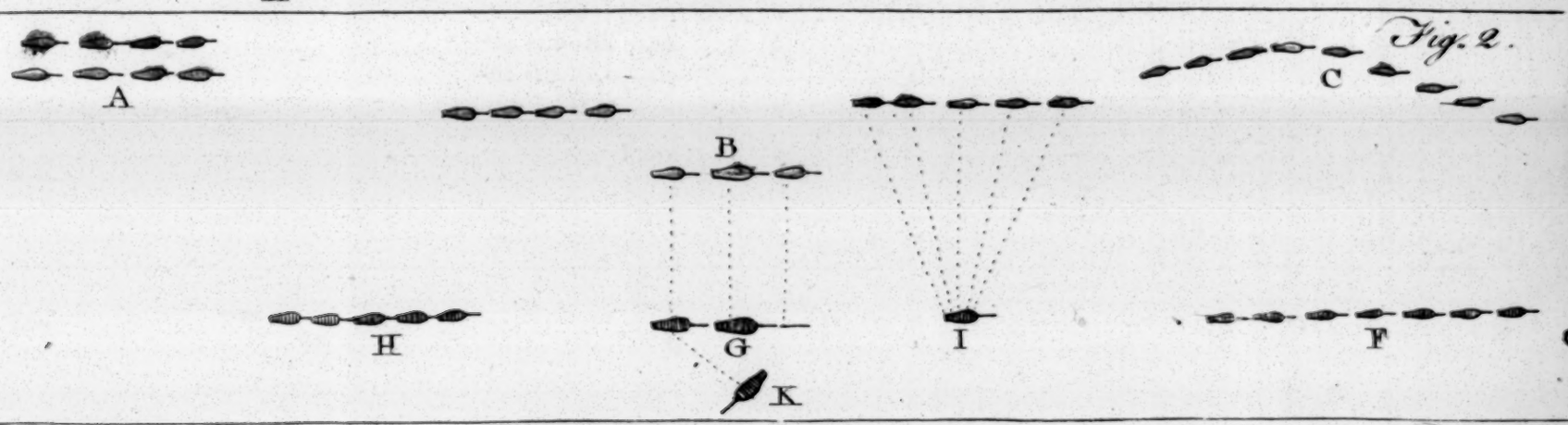


Fig 3.d

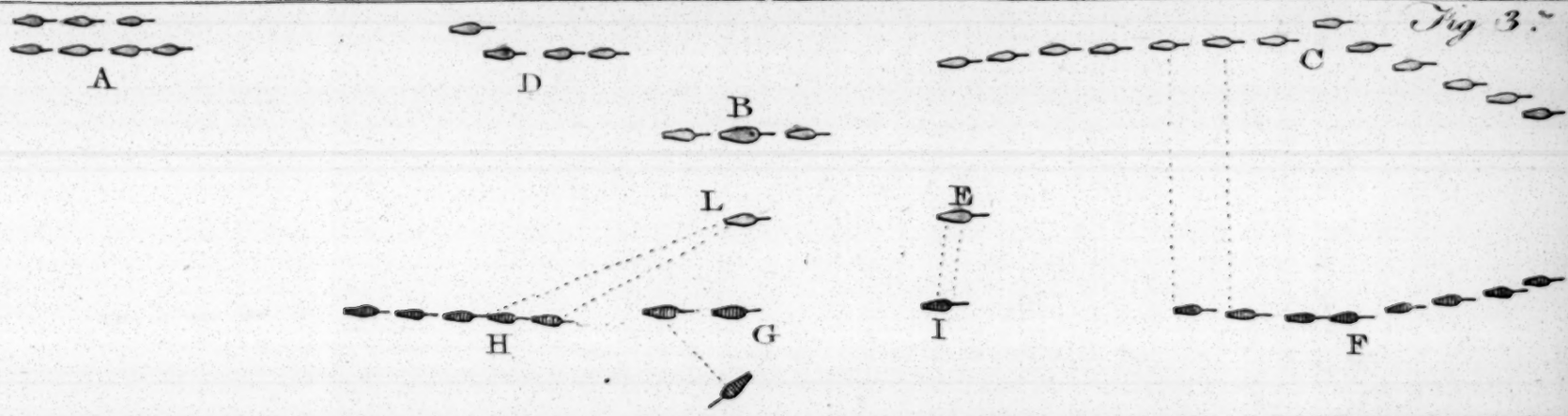
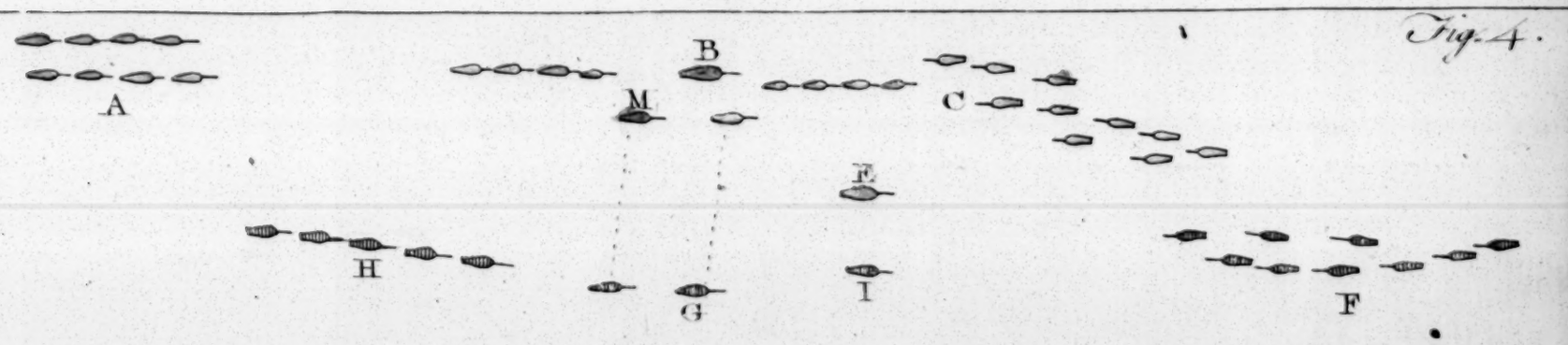


Fig. 4.



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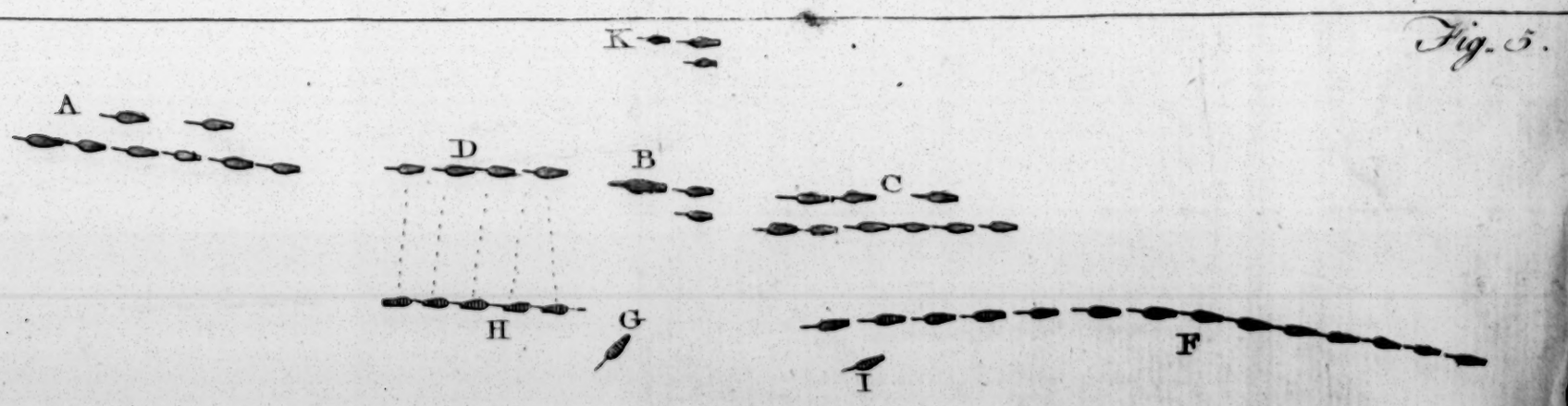


Plate XIII.

Mode of Attack proposed.

Fig 1

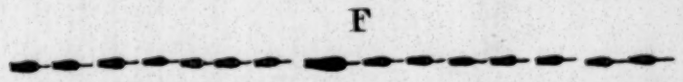


Fig 2

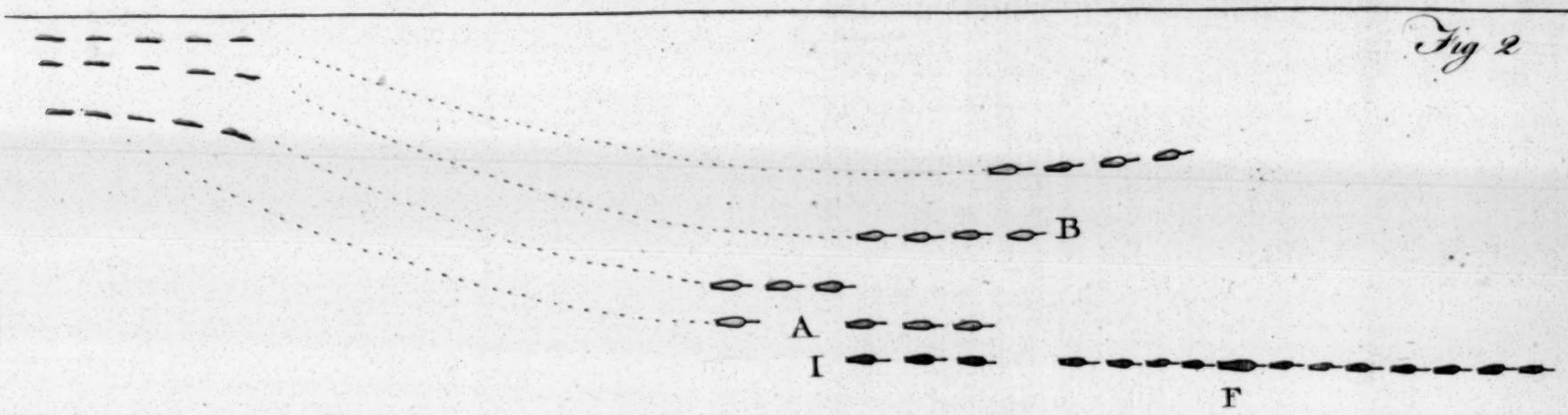


Fig. 3

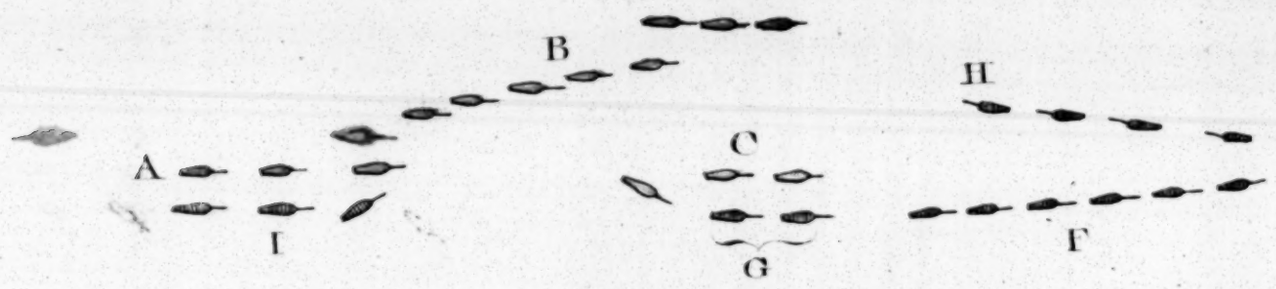


Fig 4

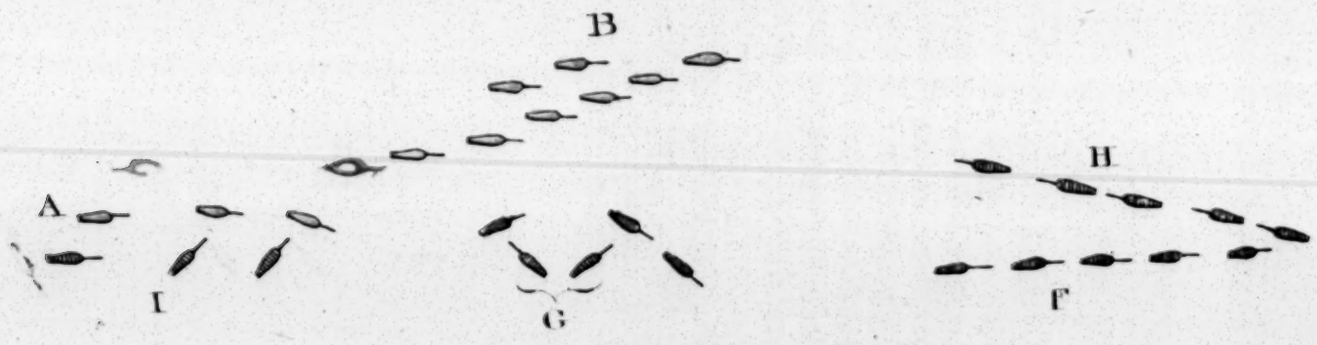
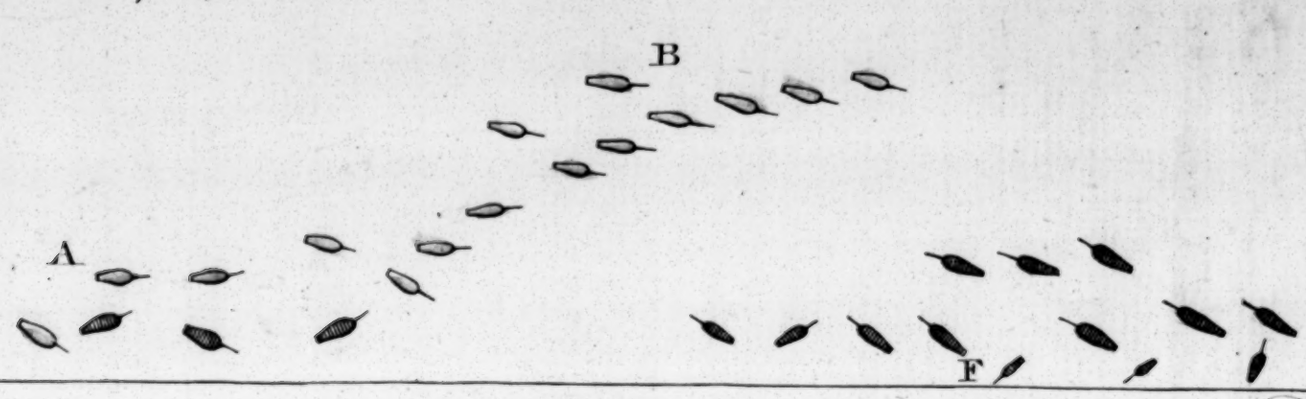


Fig. 5

Mode of Attack proposed.

Fig. 6.



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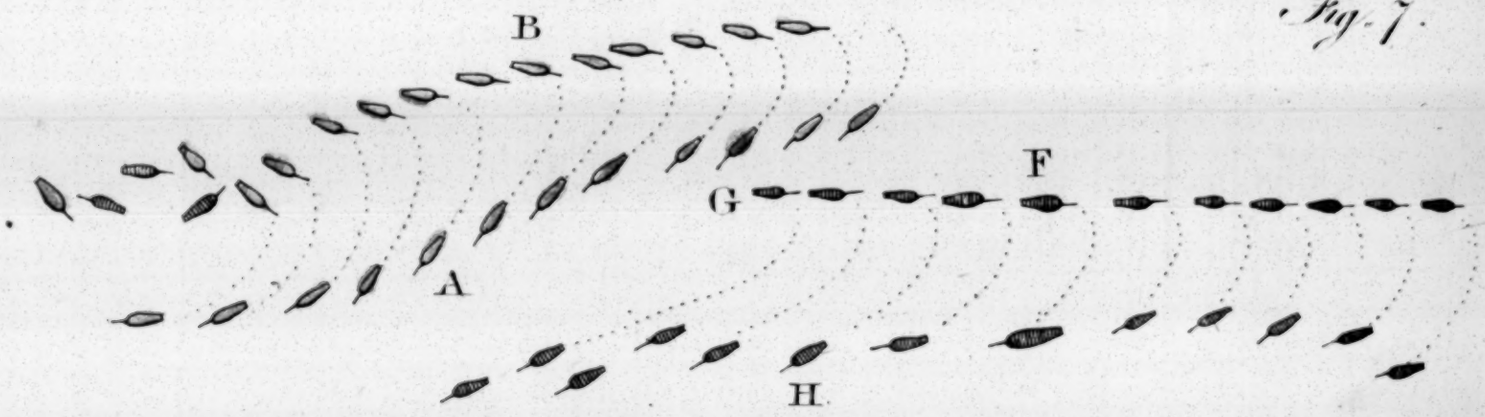

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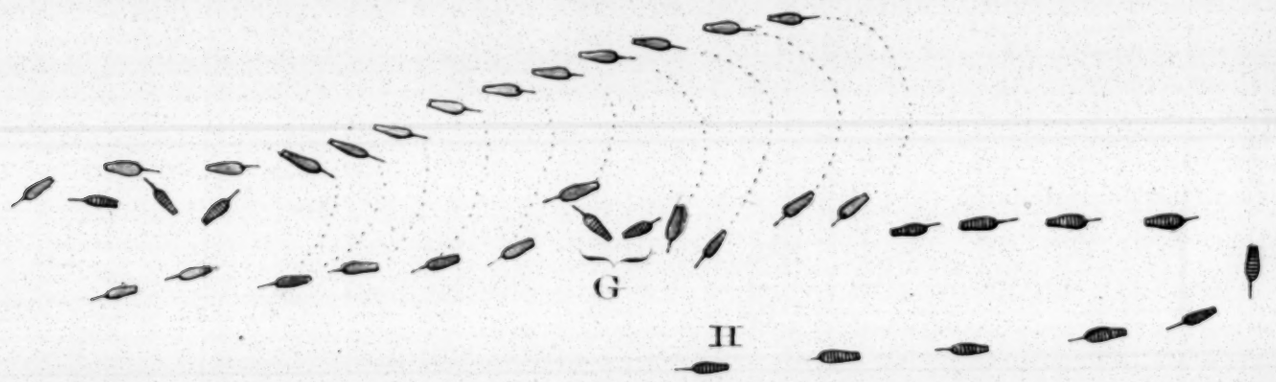
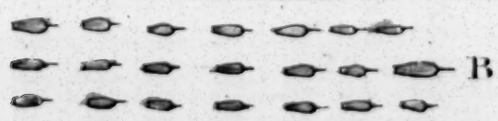
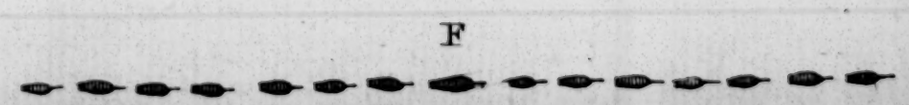


Fig. 9.

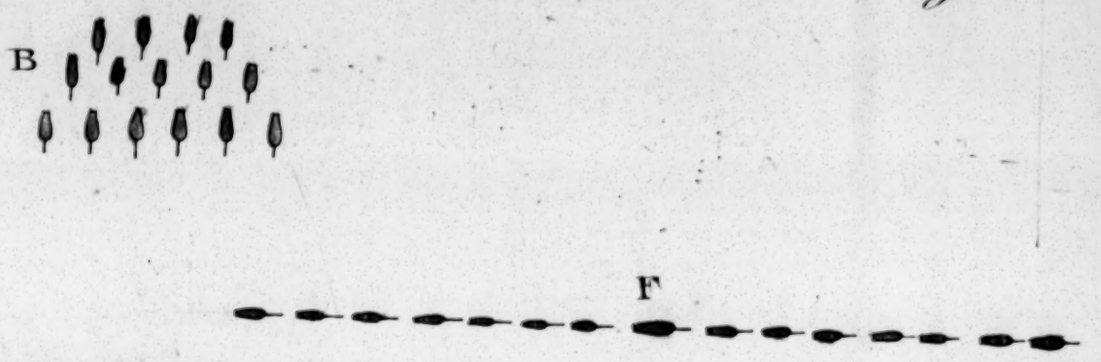
Fig. 10.





Mode of Attack proposed.

Fig. 11.



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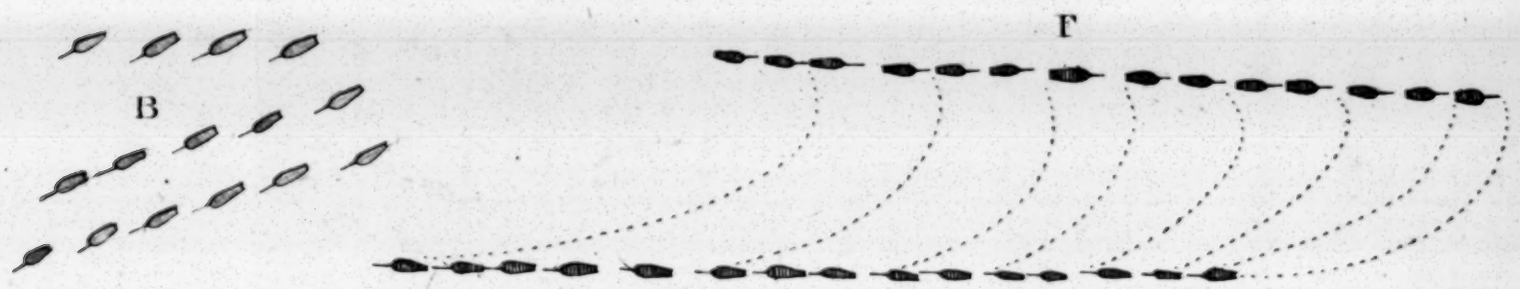

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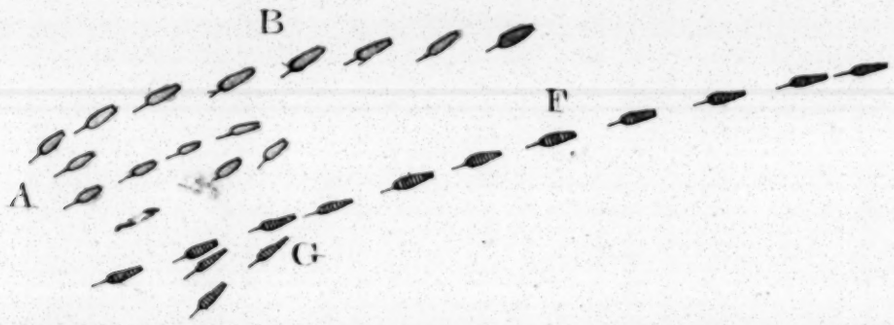
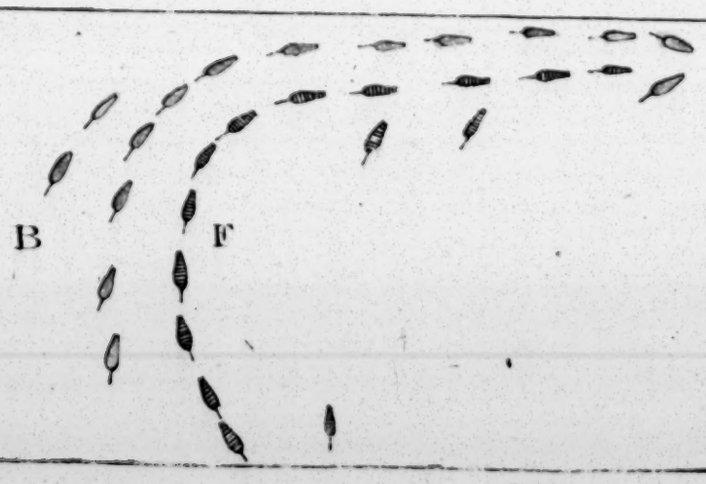


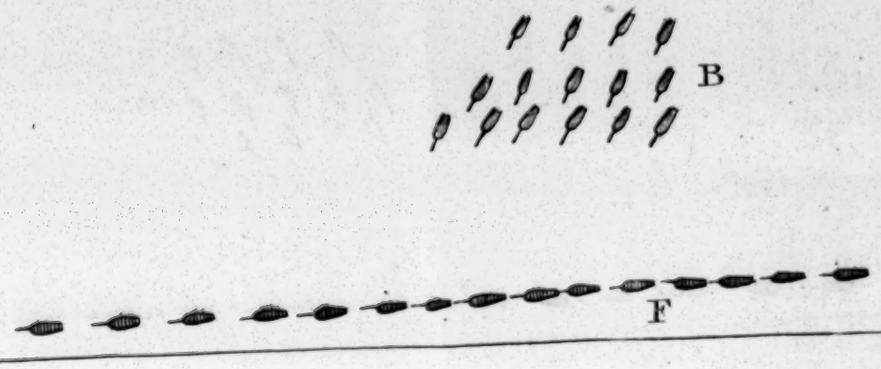
Fig. 14.

Fig. 15.



Mode of Attack proposed.

Fig. 16.



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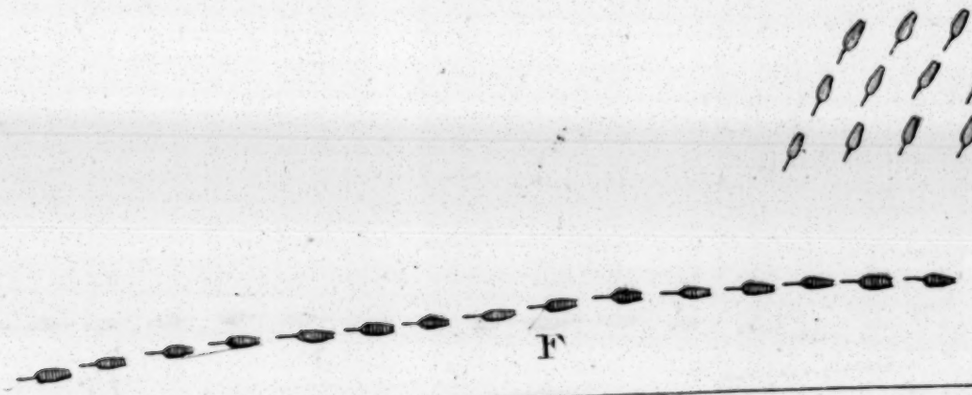

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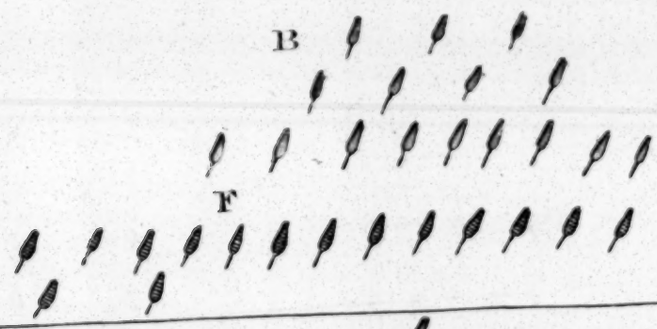
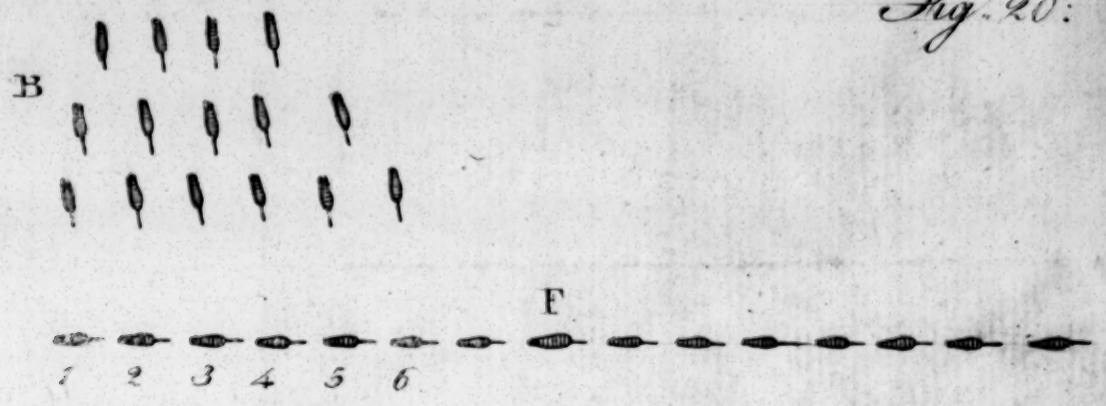


Fig. 19.

Mode of Attack proposed.

Fig. 20.



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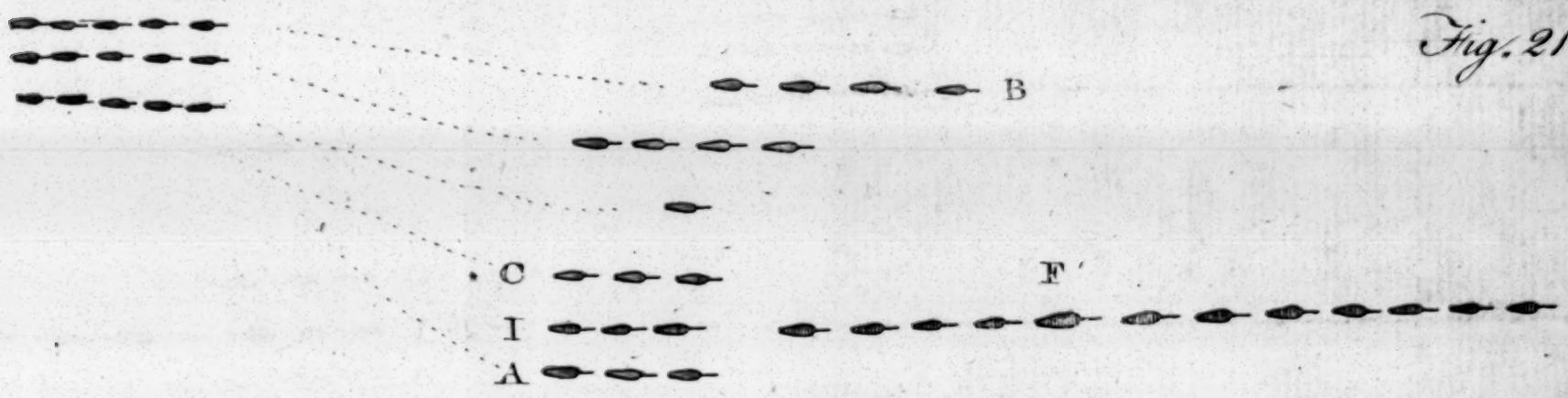

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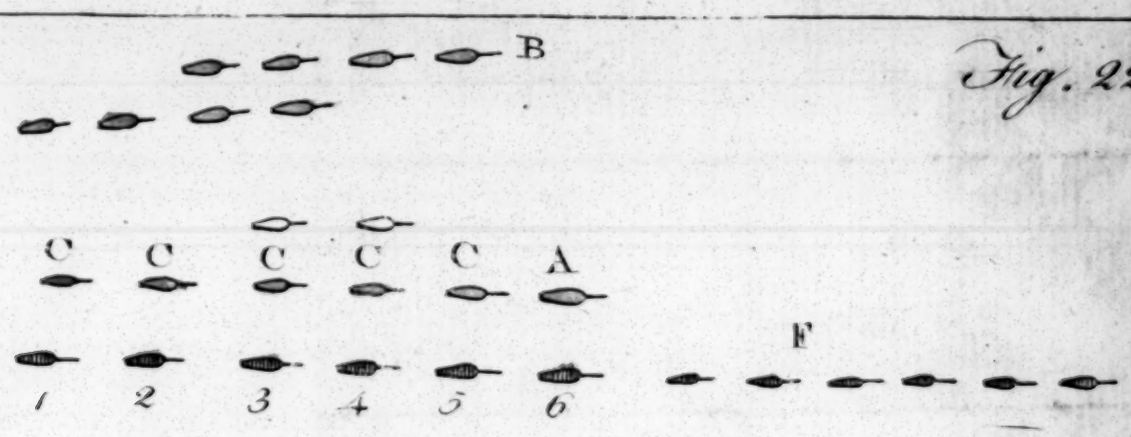

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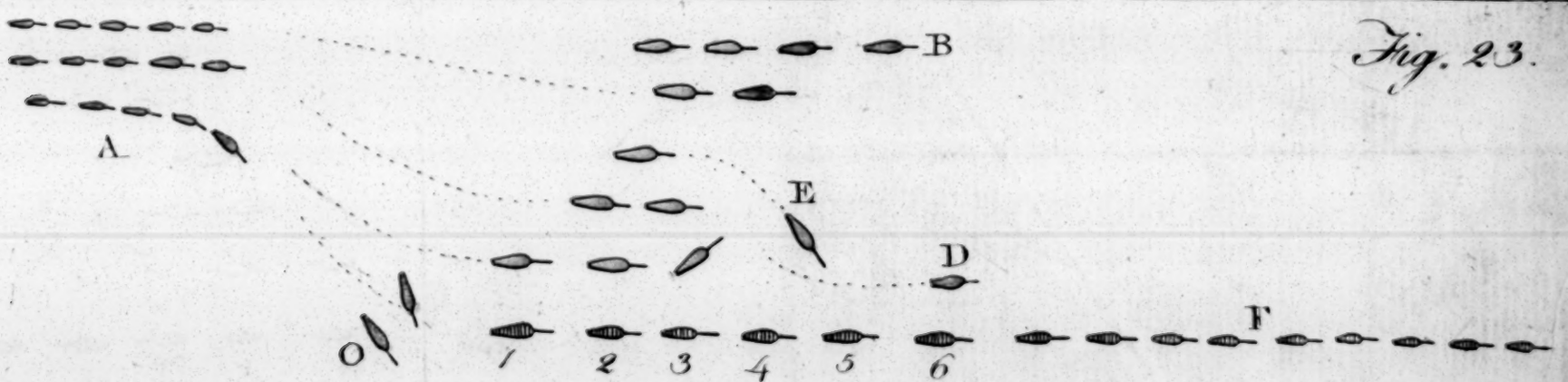

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